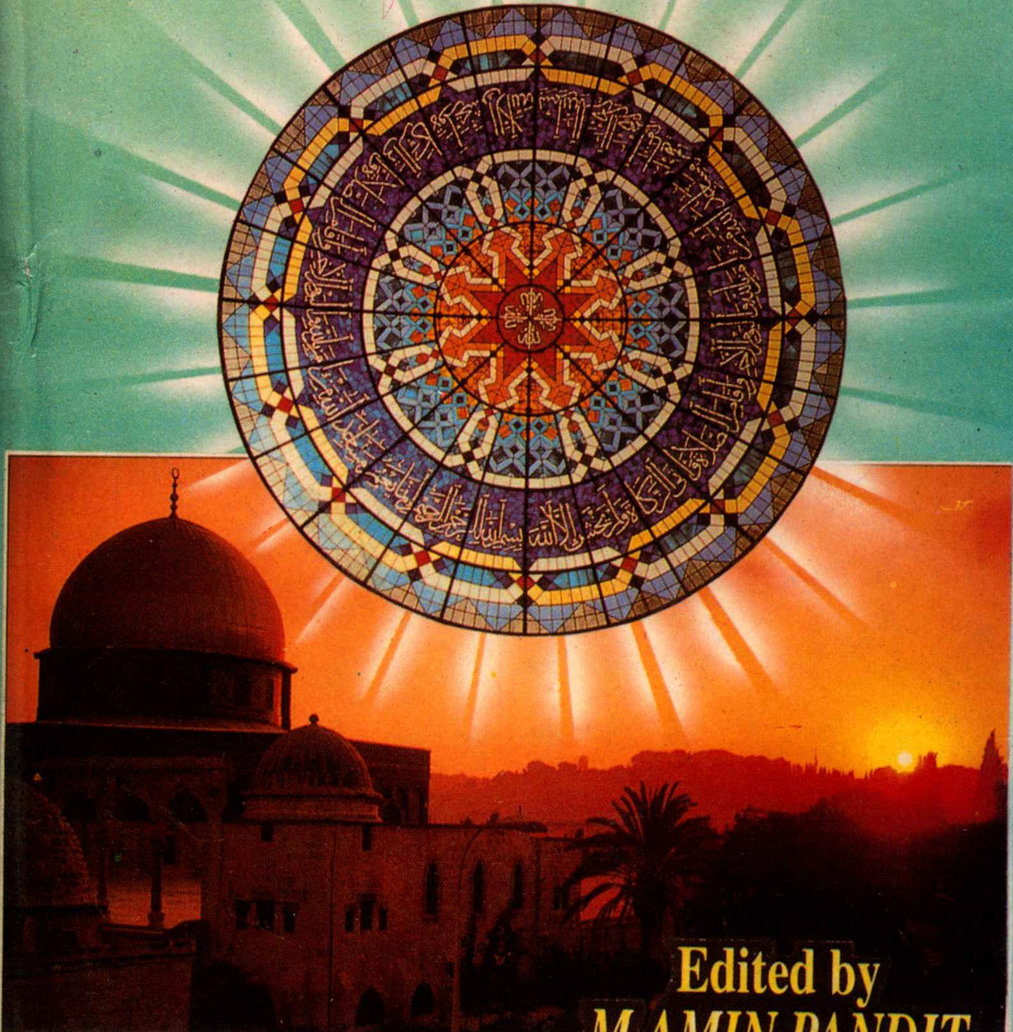
ALAMDAR-I-KASHMIR

STANDARD-BEARER PATRON-SAINT OF KASHMIR



Edited by
M.AMIN PANDIT

ALAMDAR-1-KASHMIR

STANDARD-BEARER
PATRON-SAINT OF KASHMIR

ALAMDAR-1-KASHMIR

STANDARD-BEARER
PATRON-SAINT OF KASHMIR

Edited by
M. AMIN PANDIT
KASHMIR COUNCIL OF RESEARCH

GULSHAN PUBLISHERS
SRINAGAR -KASHMIR

1997

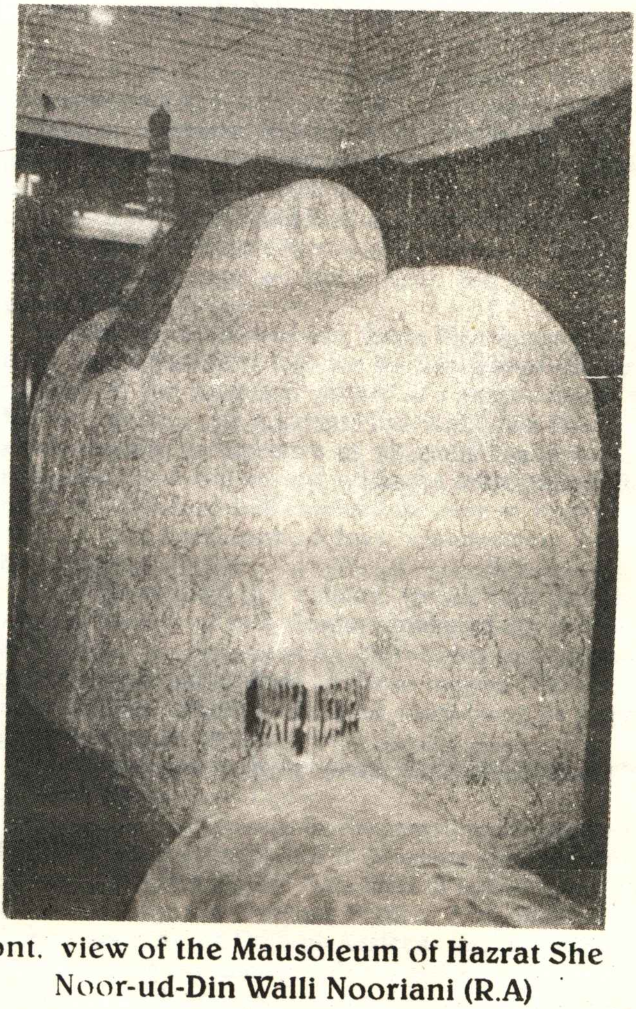
First Edition 1997

ISBN 81-86714-05-7

Published by :
S. Ajaz
for
Gulshan Publishers
Gow Kadal, Srinagar
Kashmir (India)

Distributors
Sheikh Mohammad Usman & Sons (Regd.)
Exchange Road, Gow Kadal Chowk
Srinagar - 190 001 (Kashmir)

Laser Typeset by
Future Vision Computers
Muncipality Road, Srinagar, (Kashmir)



A front. view of the Mausoleum of Hazrat She
Noor-ud-Din Walli Nooriani (R.A)

INTRODUCTION

The Kashmir Council of Research held a Seminar in 1978 to commemorate the six hundredth birth anniversary of the Saint Patron of Kashmir, Sheikh Noor-ud-din Noorani Reshi (R.A.) popularly known as Alamdar-i-Kashmir. The Seminar was presided over by Hon'ble Mian Jalal-du-din then Chief Justice, High Court of Judicature, Jammu and Kashmir. A number of prominent scholars of the Valley read their Papers at the Seminar. The Papers and some other contributions on the subject are now presented in this publication.

Hazrat Sheikh Noor-ud-din, Reshi Wali was not only a great saint but a great Kashmiri too, for he established the personality and identity of the Kashmiri people at a most critical period of the Valley's history. His greatness lies in the fact that he is revered by all Kashmiris, irrespective of religious convictions. To Muslims he is Sheikh-ul-Aalam and to Hindus Sahazanand. But to all of us he is the standard-bearer of all the best in Kashmir's composite culture and traditions of love, compassion, brotherhood and humanity.

While presenting this volume, we are told that the late Mr. G. Ahmed Jeweler of M/S Ghulam Mohi-ud-din and Sons, Srinagar, had donated an amount of Rs 500/- as his contribution towards the printing and publication of these papers. We are not sure who received this donation, the later years being of disarray. May the grace of God be on him:

We are thankful to the scholars, whose Papers have been included in this volume.

The opinions expressed by the contributors are their own. We are thankful to the Curator, S.P.S. Museum, Srinagar, for providing a photograph, showing the twin sides of a coin issued in Kashmir in 1806 A.D. by the Durrani Prince. Atta Mohammad Khan, in commemoration of Qutb-ul-Aarfeen, Hazrat Sheikh Noor-ud-din Noorani. Another photograph of a portrait of Alamdar-i-Kashmir, the original whereof exists with Hakim Syed Shah Sahib of Astan--i-Pain , Kishtwar had been procured for publication in this book but, keeping in view the religious sentiments, it was decided not to include the portrait in this book.

Shortly after the Seminar on Sheikhul Alam was held in 1978, we had an occasion to learn about the shocking incident of desecration of Holy Kaaba in Makkah Mukaramah, Saudi Arabia,

when a group of armed young men had trooped into the Holy Mosque (Masjid-ul-Haram) and indulged in a blood-bath, an despicable act, whatever may have been the political motivation behind this gruesome incident. Consequently, the security noose had been tightened around the Harm-i-Sharief in Makkah.

This incident was in the hind brain of this Editor when in April 1995, he along with some three thousand Hajies from Jammu and Kashmir, were shocked and terrified to learn soon after performing Haj at Maidan-i-Arafat and completing our Tawaf- -i-Ifadah around Kaabatullah, that Charar-e-Sharief, the final resting place of Alamdar-i-Kashmir, and the township around the Holy Shrine had been torched and reduced to ashes, Next to Babri Masjid and Hazratbal tragedies this constituted to be the greatest blow which could be inflicted upon the heritage of Kashmir, A slur indeed on Armed personnel who profess to be saviors but in fact are wolves in sheep-skin. Readers may also see Editor's Comment at the conclusion of the Articles.

Our commemoration, therefore, is an occasion to reaffirm our faith in the message of Peace and love, so ably taught by Sheikh Noor-ud-din Noorani (R.A.)

We must remember that, as aptly stated by UNESCO's Director General, Mr. Federico Mayer, "wars begin in the minds of men, and it is in the minds of men that the defenses of peace must be constructed".

We should like to reproduce hereunder a foot note written by this Editor in his book "Festivals of Kashmir" (P.33);-

"To the great misfortune of Kashmiri Muslims in particular and the Islamic world in general, Hazaratbal and Charar-e-Sharief had to undergo vicissitudes of worst order during the past few years of tumultuous turbulence, but there can always be a hope for better days to come. A phoenix is said to rise from its ashes with renewed vigour!"

With this golden advice to the two warring nations in the Indo-Pak sub-continent, we feel privileged to present this book to our dear readers.

We are grateful to our Publishers for co-operating in bringing out this publication.

1-1-1997. *(M. Amin Pandit)*
Nishat-Srinagar.

CONTENTS

NUNDA RISHI
A MULTIDIMENSIONAL PERSONALITY

The Universe is believed by some great astronomers to have begun with a "Big Bang," a terrific explosion, some 15 billion years ago (The Times of India-December 11,1977).

Surprisingly Religions and Languages have also almost always had miraculously "Big Bangs" to start with without any previous history, leaving the world of thinkers and scholars to wonder as to how could such phenomena appear suddenly and instantaneously. Unable to understand as to how could nations and languages, all of a sudden throw up great souls, saints, poets and writers with such a momentum that, to whatever distance their thrust reached, smaller insignificant particles were charged to appear as brilliant stars. Ludicrous theories appeared time and again to explain the inexplicable.

Kashmir has been unique in having had two such surprises, two Big Bangs, in the personalities of Lalla (Arifa) and Nunda Rishi, one following immediately on the heels of the other.

Lalla reportedly served as a foster mother to Nunda, as also a fellow traveller, and fore-runner on the path leading to the ultimate goal.

She, of course, could not feed the child on her dry breasts the white liquid, the milk, but surely was able to transmit invisible spiritual waves down deep into its soul to appear later as a potent force in his career as a great spiritualist.

Some of the early historians agree that Shah Hamdan had a lengthy talk with Nunda in seclusion, when he was only a boy of seven.

A seemingly incredible and unbelievable meeting.

A seasoned scholar, a great mo'min, an internationally recognised spiritual leader and a luminary of a high order on the one hand and an unknown, illiterate unsophisticated poor village boy, apparently of no significance, on the other:.

What could have transpired between the two diametrically opposite human beings.Of course, a message through eyes, a telepathic occulturally charged communion, from a great soul to a receptive born saint.

The imperceptible radiation from the eyes of a great saint is able to activise, into a living vision, the darkest soul.

"Za Khaki Tira royanad nigah ra" *(Iqbal)*

The seed thus spiritually treated germinated into a miraculous seedling, which grew differently in its surroundings.

Other children of Nunda's age behaved normally, played rough games, called each other names, tore clothes of each other, and followed their elders' pursuits without murmur.

A day- dreamer, a moralist, much older in thinking and behaviour at his age, an abnormal child Nunda shunned the company of the children of his locality, did not quarrel, advised and admonished even his seniors for bad deeds. A prodigal indeed of a saintly order in his early teens, Nunda refused to toe the burglars' line of his so called elder brothers, and instead warned them by interpreting the barking of a dog.

"Listen brothers to what the dog is crying aloud.
It repeatedly says:. Sow; Sow!
"What? undoubtedly the seed of righteousness".

He would not read beyond A and B, saying that there was no third being other than Allah and Muhammad, the Prophet (Peace be upon him.)

His parents, though themselves devoted Muslim, would not see their young son behaving abnormally, and becoming a problem-child for them. They would like to see him grow into a hopeful and a useful young man.

As is usual in the case of such abnormal children, the parents, in consultation with the wise among their kith and kin, decided to apply the last curative, namely the marriage of Nunda with a neighboring village girl, Zee, at an early age of thirteen.

This no doubt bound him down for some years, but even though be became father of a son and daughter, his earnings and daydreaming did not improve, and he finally threw over the cloak of this worldliness and severed all connections with his mother, his wife and his two loving innocent children. This act of his must have shocked the conscience of all the people, must have invoked sympathies for all of them, whom he left uncared for, his middle

aged mother, his young wife and his two kids. No one to look after them. But to soar to great heights, one should carry the least burden. It was not, therefore, an uncommon phenomenon. Nunda"s love for Allah and His Prophet (Peace be upon him) proved overwhelming, and he sacrificed all worldly affections without a pang at the Alter of Love.

Great ends need great sacrifices. At an advanced age after accomplishing and attaining the desired objective, Nunda felt sorrow for the poor souls whom he had left in anguish and misery. To his devoted disciple Nasar Baba he made the confession by saying that it had been his folly that he had left his hearth and home and had taken to caves and jungles, because the best course would have been to follow the footprints of the great Prophet (Peace be upon him) who has desired a mo'min to live with his family but with heart and head devoted to righteousness and love of God.

Nanda went into the darkness of caves to get his soul enlightened and in turn to illuminate his dark surroundings into oblivion, in order to gain eternal bliss, immortality and nearness to God Himself. He chose the path strewn with thorns instead of the easy going path of roses. He threw over the accepted norms of relationship and created a world of his own where the bonds of love and brotherhood extend beyond the bounds of religion, birth and geography. He mastered the rebellious senses, and entered into the arena of the supra-sensory perception., became a man of vision and learnt and saw what the ordinary mind and eyes cannot comprehend and perceive. He was metamorphosed into a supernatural being.

Poetry flew forth from his mouth, like a fountain of water gushing from an unknown source, and bringing with it the voice of the soul, the heart and the head. It became the medium of communication between the perfect and the imperfect, between the immortal and the mortal, and between the secrets of the soul and humdrum life of a common man.

Showers of praises and titles awaited the man of the caves, to whom the Quranic light had been bestowed with its full brightness in the dark recesses of his solitude.

Mir Mohammad Hamdani, whom Junaraja described as the great Muslim luminary shining forth like a bright full moon among stars, applauded Nunda, commonly known as Nunda Rishi, as a Zahid, Abid, Kashif, Arif and called him for the first time by the name of

Sheikh Noor-ud-Din Noorani.

The Mashaikh of the time acknowledged him as the greatest Sheikh by naming him as Sheikh-ul-Alam. The religious missionaries and the Muslim masses called him the Wayiz and the interpreter of the Holy Quran into Kashmiri. The Rishies that joined the movement for spreading of the cult, and for propagation of Islam and the universal brotherhood, regarded him as the Chief Rishi and Alamdar of Kashmir, i.e. the bearer of the banner of Islam after Shah Hamdan. The Sultan of Kashmir respected him, and invoked his blessings. He felt honoured to be one of the Sheikh Noor-ud-din's mourners, when the latter passed away. The Sheikh lived his life in absolute and meticulous obedience to the great Prophet's life, whom he regarded as Rishi Number One;

"Awal Rishi Ahmad Rishi".

Following into the footprints of Ahmad Mujtaba (peace be upon him), the Sheikh attained perfection in the four-tiered life of a mo'min, namely the Shariat i.e. the word of the Prophet, the Tereeqat i.e. the deed of the Prophet., the Haqiqat i.e. the spirit of the Prophet and M'rafat, the knowiedge of Allah that the Prophet himself had.

He covered with caution the first journey through this worldly life, of Nasut, the thorny path, with Taqwa and piety adopting carefully the straight path Suratal Mustqeem, through Malakut he travelled like angels, away from the shackles of this life, detached from all sorts of attachments. He gave himself the bearest minimum needs of life, fasting by days and keeping awake during nights, through Jabarut and Lahut he travelled to heights where angels do not dare tread and ultimately he attained to the highest bliss near like his Number one among Rishies, Ahmad Rishi, the great Prophet of Islam (Peace and tranquility be upon him,) about which the Sheikh himself says: "I thoroughly imbibed the spirit of oneness of God Almighty" i.e. Tawheed and became one with Revelation itself. I mastered my carnal self and realised the Truth, the Eternal Being and ultimately reached La Makan, the spaceless space.)

This stage of the attainment of a rare sixth dimension by a Wali is notably the one known in the modern scientific language as the dimension of extra sensory perception, a phase of a saintly life in which a sixth sense is created that can perceive things beyond the scope of the five normal senses.

It is here that Ghalib explains and Arif Rumi expresses it more

specifically. When this sixth sense is awakened the soul itself becomes the seat of Revelation. What is revelation? Speaking from the hidden sense.

" Pas mahalli wahy gardad goshi Jan
Wahy chi bowed guftan az hissi nihan."

Hazrat Sheikh rises even higher than this stage to the seventh dimension, beyond which Awaliyaallah cannot go, and the one seldom attained by a Sufi. It is here that the Wali receives direct light from the source, the Almighty, the zone of silence where eyes speak and not the tongue.

"Amen Panan Partawi haq Peyon
Hnvun Wyondum gate to gash
Kumuy harfu akkiy sabaq gom
Waneha nonte kathi, gatzh fash"

At this Maqami Tahhayyur a Wali gets generally stunned and absorbed to the extent that he completely loses himself, as described by a very great Wali, namely Hazrat Ali Hajwari, Data Ganj Baksh, but the really great like our Alamdar maintain balance and equity. It is here that Shah Waliellah Muhhadis Dahlawi described the three unique dimensions of the Pr- -het (Peace be upon him).

In his Muqashifa, an ecstasy, Shah Wali-ullah dreamt of a strange dream. A huge triangle with its apex against the sky and its base on soil; the same triangle reversing its position and resting its base against the sky and apex on the earth, this in turn giving place to a rectangular with its opposite sides resting on the sky and the earth in the same manner.

The first two positions of the triangle indicated that on one hand the great Prophet (Peace be upon him) was so much absorbed in his love for humanity that he seemed to have had only a very negligible attachment, of only a small point, with the skies and on the other he looked to have had only a point's relation with the Earth, while his whole attachment had been for the Heaven. And the third figure, that of the rectangular, demonstrated that the Prophet was equally strongly attached to man and God.

(Dr. Basharat Ahmad Para Amma).

This very elevated spiritual stage, though very rarely reached, is within the scope of a true follower of the Prophet (Peace be upon him). Sheikh Noor-ud-Din was one of the very few who have in varying measures had the luck and the opportunity of acquiring this stage of perfection, the position where all dimensions shrink

to two only:intense love for man and equally great love for God, which in turn boil down finally to one i.e. in great attachment to feel completely detached or in complete detachment to have complete attachment.

The Sheikh's life indicated in his poetry as we know it now, is a glaring example of a great soul absorbed on the one hand in his love for the earthly life of man, pining for his misdeeds, admonishing and advising him to remember that this earthly abode is a temporary phase, while the life hereafter is the real life, he sees the scholars, the rishies, the mullas, every one playing the game of a hypocrite. He warns them to realise that they shall have to face the consequences before God, Almighty.

"Almah Porwo wofe" kay hawsay
Tchalas Chiweh zegan akis akh
Kowo Chuwe 'gumane' asy chi khasay
tatina mokilive't sase manze akh."

He observes nature as a man of intellect, and sees the hand of nature guiding and controlling everything in the universe.

"Dithuth naras got te Tulris manchhiy
Dituth halan halis ronthnas dachh.
Lage pari chani godrachiy
Dituth roosis kastur rachh"

and on the other he is engrossed in the all absorbing love of God, in which he looses his self and becomes part of the whole truth.

"Wajud Trawith mujud sorum
Har mokhe wuchhum pane nuy pan."

And in his most perfect form he feels equally attached to the Earth and the Heaven, and thus realises and attains the truest kind of Earthly and Heavenly love as his great Master, Ahmad Reshi (Peace be upon him) has in much greater proportions attained:

"Yath wawe halay tchong kus zalay
Tile kani zales alim to din
Parkath trewith so kath palay
kul alim chus alif lam meem"

Thus in his multidimensional life Nunda Sanz marched ahead from a illiterate ignorant village boy to the stage of a seer, a scholar of Almi Ludun, having had tutoring direct from the source, namely the Prophet himself: a poet of an unrivalled sort, who enriched the Kashmiri Language with scores of new idioms, proverbs and Ashloks that shine forth with the brilliance of a true jewel, and

have become the treasure house of our cultural heritage, one who rose to the position of a narrator of the Holy Book, Al Quran, in Kashmiri as had previously been done by an equally great Muslim, the Maulana of Rume, a Rishi seemingly of an ascetic order of Rahibs but in reality a true follower of Islam, who became the founder of the Islamic Rishi cult in the valley, a missionary, a wayiz, a mubbaligh who initiated a new movement, and became the bearer of the banner of Islam in Kashmir, Alamdar-i- Kashmir., A Salik of a higher order who chose the difficult path of abstinence from every sweet thing of life, and denied himself all the comforts and joys that this world offers to a man, a true Muslim who was truly detached in his attachment, and one who seemed greatly attached in his detachment, and in the mystic observation of Hazrat Rumi.

" Bazari kungrayay kibriyash mardanand
Firishta sayd wa payamber shikaru yazdan gir."

He acquired the distinction of men of real eminence in this universe, and became one of those few who surpass the angels in their devotion and purity, vie with the Prophets by their righteous deeds and attain to the highest position of Nearness to Almighty.

Mirza G.H. Beg Arif.

SILSILA RISHIAN-E-KASHMIR

Despite their position of privilege the prophet's immediate companions and followers maintained the simple dignity and austerity of habit which they had learned from Prophet Mohammed s a w s, but when the far flung conquests of the first century of Islam brought immense power and wealth to Muslims, those who exercised sway over the vast territories, barring some exceptions, lived a life of ease and luxury. Worldly considerations supplanted spiritual aspiration as the bases of government.

The devout and religiously minded withdrew from the society. Thus was born the Sufi movement. Poverty and abstinence got established as an important article of their code of conduct. By the end of fourth century Hijra Sufism became firmly established as a fairly rigid and clearly definable way of life and system of thought. Al-Gazali (d 505 H/1111 A.D.) in the famous Ihya' Ulum-al -Din explained that the Sufi mysticism has not only put forth a lofty ethic and a subtle metaphysic but it developed aesthetically in a manner soaring high above the ranges of pure speculations. Maulana Rumi (d 672 H/1273 c) gathered into his vast poem a lot about mysticism.

2. The soil of the vale of Kashmir has been fertile for the reception and spread of Islamic Mysticism. In his translation of Raj-Tarangani Vol.I P.130 M.A. Stein writes that:

> *"Islam made its way to Kashmir not by forcible conquest but by gradual conversion for which the influx of foreign adventurers both from the south and from Central Asia had prepared the ground."*

Buzarg Ibn Shaharyar, in his travel memoirs, written in 3rd century Hijri entitled "Ajaib Ul Hind" refers to a translation of the glorious Quran prepared at the instance of king Mehroke of Kashmir.

Murasala Kashmir published in 1872 A.D.June issue has recorded that "the prophet Mohammed s a w s had deputed his two emissaries to meet the Kashmir Raja Pandit Venadutt".

According to Kitabul Hind "(P21)" of Alberuni, Mohammad bin Qasim marched "through the confines of Kashmir......... leaving to the people their ancient belief, except in the case of those who wanted to become Muslims".Hamim who accompanied him settled in Kashmir, Mohammad bin Qasim occupied Sind in 93 H/712 A.D.

From this I conclude that not only had Islamic precepts got known to the people of Kashmir but that muslims had settled in its salubrious climate from the very first century of Hijra era.

3. It was Sheikh Noor ud din Noorani, R.A. who established the Sufi order of Rishian-e-Kashmir on a sound basis. Before him sufism was practiced individually and in small groups. The form of first organised and mass movement took place with the establishment of silsilla Rishian-e Kashmir in 8th century (751-820 H/1377/1438 c).

The first Muslim Sufi of whom we have a written record is Bulbul Shah at whose hands Rinchan Shah (1320-23 c) publicly declared himself to be a Muslim.

Some believe that sufi order of Rishiane Kashmir is an offshoot of the Buddhist and Brahminical mysticism and that the Islamic Rishi order had existed in ancient period as well in the form of Brahminical.,Buddhist and Sakimonist practices (Baba Daud Mishkati 1605-27 c). The term "Naked mendicants" appearing in historical books apparently refers to Muslim missionaries who lived at the sub- subsistence level and did not care for personal comforts of clothing and food.

4. In the words of Sheikh Ul Alam himself it had been in existence in the ancient period as well. Accordingly he names Ahmad, Ovais, Rumah, Palas, Zalka and Miran as six in the line proceeding him in the words:

1. Aval Rishi Ahmad Rishi
2. Daom Hazrat Ovais Ao
3. Triyum Rishi Rumah Rishi
4. Tsurim Hazrat Palas Ao
5. Pantsium Rishi Zalka Rishi
6. Shiyum Hazrat Miran Ao
7. Satimis Karnam Hisha na dishey Bo Kuh Reosh me Kiah nao.

The Rishian-e-Kashmir silsila is primarily based on self effort. It is also called OVAISI after Hazrat Ovais RA the belief being that instruction is imparted from Murshid to Khalifa even in absence of physical contact and that physical separation is no barrier to spiritual communication. Hazrat Ovais RA never had physical contact with the Prophet SAWS but he was devoted to him and was held in esteem by the Prophet S A W S.

Sheikh Noorud din, it is recorded, received spiritual guidance directly from the Prophet SAWS in 787 H, when the Prophet SAWS accompanied by his four illustrious friends graced him with his Presence.

5. The Kashmiri speaking people owe a debt of gratitude to Sheikh-ul-aalm for several reasons. It was he who guided them and instructed them in Islam in the local Bhasha. His sayings are preserved in what has come to be known as Rishi Nama or Noor Nama i.e. Rishi's sayings. These verses, in old Kashmiri, continue to move thousands of people into ecstasy. His rendering of some Quranic ordinances in pithy verses is simply a marvel.

He created bands of disciples and missionaries who spread in all directions, Preaching and practising the message of love and brotherhood regardless of one's caste, creed, colour or social status. They were peace loving. The inroads of military and political adventures left trails of misery behind among the masses. Only seven years before Sheikh Ul Alam's birth i.e. 720 H 1319 c, a grand son of Hallaku Khan named Zulqadar but nicknamed Zulcha invaded Kashmir, plundered the people, burnt the city, left with many slaves who perished on the snowy mountains. The ruler fled to Kishtwar, Zanga-Sanz, great-great-grand father of Sheikh Ul Alam was killed during this invasion.

The Sheikh and his disciples influenced the Kashmiri masses to the extent that they became tolerant of others' creed and views and developed aversion for cruelty and intolerance. A vast majority of Sufis have produced Kalam in Kashmiri intermingled with Persian and Arabic. The surprising part of it is that many illiterate Sufis have produced Kalam of a very high quality. Even the average mystic of Kashmir instructs his disciples- the seekers after truth to begin with 10 donts and 9 dos. The 10 donts are "Hirs (Greed) 2. amal (Wishful thinking) 3. ghazab (anger) 4. dorouogh (falsehood) 5. gheebah (slander) 6.bukhl (miserliness) 7. hasad (envy) 8. riya (show) 9. kibr (pride) 10. keena (malice). The 9 dos are 1. sabr

(fortitude) 2. shukr (gratitude) 3. kanath (contentment) 4. yeqeen (faith) 5. tawaqal (trust in God). 6. tafveed (entrusting one's affairs to God) 7. rida (satisfaction) 8. tasleem (submission to the will of God) 9. Ilm (knowledge).

We yearn for a heaven on earth so that there is end to all our misery and man regains his exalted position of viceregent of God. If one began in a humble way, even with the 10 donts most of our self made feuds and troubles will be over. A sure way to salvation lies in the 9 dos.

Khwahi ki shawad dili tu chun ayeena
dah cheese biroon Kum uz duroni sena
Hiirs o amal o ghazab o durogh o gheebuh
Bukhl o hasad o riya o kibr o keena
Khwahi Ki shawi b manzil qurb muqeem
Nuh cheese b nafs e kheesh furm taleem
Sabar o Shukr o qanaat o ilm o yaqin
Tafveed o Tawakal o rida o Talim

Is it beyond man's ingenuity to lead people to an understanding of one's innermost self when he is making such rapid progress towards understanding his physical environments?

There is need for reviving the sublime traditions that led to the founding of the great Silsilas. We can derive lot of solace and strength by reading Noor-Nama.

Ghulam Hassan Khan.

NUNDRISHI
A POINT OF VIEW

Now that Kashmir has fully come into its own, it is only meet and proper that Kashmiris should pay grateful homage to their illustrious ancestors who have contributed so richly to making them what they are at their best - compassionate and kind- hearted, humane and hospitable, religious minded and spiritually bent, and seekers after truth and pursuers of higher knowledge. These indeed are the qualities that have made them to cynosure of all eyes and a source of pride and inspiration to all those who believe in the brotherhood of man and the fundamental unity of all faiths.

One such great ancestor of ours who has left an indelible mark on the thinking and culture of Kashmiris was named Nund Riyosh. Also known as Sheikh Nur- ud-Din Wali, the great sage was one of the twin star of the second half of the fourteenth and the first half of the fifteenth centuries A.D., the other being his senior contemporary, Lal Ded the intensity of whose mystic experience and the profundity of whose utterances remain almost unrivaled to this day.

The celebration,in 1978 A.D., of the six hundredth anniversary of this great man who lived from 1377 to 1438 A.D.., understandably led to a revival of interest in all,that he said and stood for. Much was said and written about him during the centenary year and considerable light thrown on some hitherto little known facts and aspects of his life and work. But in the absence of contemporary records of any type about him, there yet remain certain questions to which correct answers must be found to enable a correct assessment and critical appraisal to be made of his multi-faceted personality and his invaluable contribution to his motherland.

Sheikh Nur-ud-Din Sahib lived in one of the most crucial periods of Kashmir's long and cheuered history. But beyond a solitary line

in a chronicle of his time, we have no contemporary record about his life or work. Certain details in this behalf have come down to us in various Rishinamas or Nurnaamas. But these, as Mr. Amin Kamil, who has subjected some of them to a critical study, points out, greatly differ from one another. In the profusion of miracles and magical deeds ascribed to him, some important details about his life and work have dropped out. And in the words of the great poet and literary historian of our own time, the late poet Abdul Ahad Azad, "greater reliance has been placed in them on imagination than on historical facts". His verse sayings known as Shruks (from Sanskrit Sloka) in Sanskrit and what they regarded as the Pandits' language, have been completely left out by the authors of Rishinamas because they were beyond their ken or comprehension.

The first Rishinama or Nunama that has come down to us was written about two hundred years after his passing away. Inevitably there has therefore been a lot of mixing up and fresh light needs to be shed on many "un-clear" events and episodes in the story of his life and the cobwebs that have gathered around some aspects of it need to be cleared.

Take, for instance, his name itself. The great Sheikh's spiritual eminence and moral rectitude have won him the title of Sheikh-ul-Alam from his compatriots and even his one-time opponents ultimately felt constrained to acknowledge him as "the Light of the Faith" or Nur-ud-Din. But was he named as such, i.e., as Nur-ud- Din, at his birth, or did he come to be so known only after Mir Mohammad Hamadani, son of the great Mir Syed Ali Hamadani, recognised him as such?

In this connection it must be pointed out that the contemporary historian, Jonaraja, refers to him as Mala Nurdin. But in opposition to this it needs to be remembered that the sage refers to himself (in his shruks) as Nunda only. This seems to indicate its precedence in time. But it might be pointed out that even now Muslims affectionately call their children named Nur-ud-Din as Nunda. But would that justify the assumption that a practice now in vogue was prevalent six hundred years ago also? And especially at a time when Islamic rule in the valley was hardly sixty years old. As pointed out by that great antiquary Sir Aurel Stein, the new rule had not materially changed the political and cultural condition, and the administration remained as before, in the hands of the traditional

official class, the Brahmans,and Sanskrit continued to be the language of official communication. Is it not likely that in the time of Sultan Sikandar and his successor, Ali, when conversions to the new faith took place on a massive scale and in most cases under pressure, that the new converts retained their old Hindu names? In this context, it might be interesting to note that the Holy Prophet himself came to be referred to by some Hindus and the newly converted as an avatara, Possibly the newly converted continued, for some time, to give Hindu names to their children also

This would explain why Nunda Rishi has been known also as Sahazanand among the Hindus of Kashmir. Perhaps he was named as such at birth which name was foreshortened to Nanda or Hunda to conform to the new political dispensation, when the Kashmirian way of life was under heavy strain. Another possible line of thinking that too needs to be considered is that the great sage might have been born a Hindu and got converted when his blessed parents adopted the new faith. This would offer a very sound explanation for the strong Hindu bias in the great sage's thinking and his intimate knowledge of Hindu concepts and Sanskrit words and phrases.

Support to this view is available in the names of some of his close relations. His parents were named Sanz and Sadra Maji. While there is some difference of opinion about the father's name, Sadra is clearly derived from Sadra (ocean) or Sundari (a beautiful, accomplished lady). Her two sons, prior to her marriage with Salar Sanz, bore the non-Muslim names of Shush and Gandur. Was Sahazanand also born before her remarriage, following the death of her first husband? The great Sheikh's wife, Zai Ded, bore a clearly Hindu name. She too might have been a Hindu originally. Of the sage's four close disciples, two appear to have borne Hindu names originally - Baba Bam-ud- din (Bhuma Sadhu) and Baba Zain-ud-din (Ziya Singh).

It may here be mentioned that there has been a galaxy of Muslim saints and sages and some great ones among them commanded the allegiance of vast numbers of Hindus also. But they have not been known by Hindu names among their non-Muslim followers. To suggest that the Sheikh was called Shazanand because he had attained Shahja or that high "spiritual knowledge which shines by itself, by its own lusture, and which is the very nature of the self", does not seem to be plausible. Rash indeed would be the Hindu

who in the then prevailing atmosphere of ruthless persecution, when according to the popular Hindu tradition only eleven Hindu families were left in Kashmir,- would dare to call him, a Muslim saint - by a Hindu name.

According to the known facts of his life, the sage started life normally; he married and had two issues. But what he saw going around him made him intensely sad, and he lost interest in life as normally lived. It was for him, as for many others of his day, a question of " to be or not to be". So he took to caves and solitary places for penance and meditation. According to Dr. Sufi " he felt disgusted with the ways of the world, and decided upon renunciation, retired to caves for meditation at the age of thirty, " and " lived for twelve years in the wilderness". In his last days, adds Dr. Sofi, the saint sustained life on a cup of milk daily. Finally, he goes on to say, : "the sage reduced himself to water alone........."

Dr Sufi quotes Baba Daud Khaki for the statement: "In addition to leading a retired life, he was also one of those who continually fast". Like pious among the Hindus,""He had given up eating flesh, onions, milk, and honey for many years", i.e., he had given up all animal food besides onions,as has been the wont with the Hindu saints and mahatmas. Elsewhere, the eminent historian remarks in passing that "Islam does not countenance the enervating type of Tasswuf which Iqbal too condemned in the first edition of Asrar-i-Khudi..."

Of the Yasman Rishi at whose hands Nunda Rishi's parents were converted to Islam, Dr. Sufi has this to say: "he traveled far and wide. Later, he lived mostly in forests......His daily food was a cup of wild goat's milk......."

Kashmir witnessed the worst type of religious persecution in the time of Sultan Sikandar (1389-1413 A.D.) and his successor, Ali. under the influence of outsiders and at the instigation of king, according to Jonaraja, "took delight, day and night, in breaking the sacred images" and temples.. That done, the wicked minister set about destroying the caste of the people. In the time of Sikandar's successor, Ali Shah (1413-1420 A.D.) when real power was in his (minister's) hands, he forbade Hindus going out of their home land. Then they were given the alternatives of death or conversion. Many must have succumbed, abjured their ancestral faith:many others became martyrs to it. Many of those who tried to run away through the byroads, by-paths,etc., perished on the way due to difficulties.

Some feigned acceptance of Islam and wandered about in the country wearing the dress of Muslims. Was Salar Sanz among them and had his son been named Sahazanand originally?

The Sheikh lived during this very period when the very identity, the Kashmirian-ness of Kashmir, if I may use that expression,was at stake and in danger of being destroyed. And all this mainly under the influence and inspiration of outsiders, who fleeing from the wrath of Timer, had made Kashmir their home. But they came up against a big hurdle in the shape of the glorious heritage and tradition of Kashmiris and their enlightened religious philosophy. So the newcomers worked up a ruthless campaign against them and their faith. There is no denying the fact that some of those who came from outside were eminently pious and did things from conviction honestly held, but many others had their own personal axes to grind. Amin Kamil states that some of them owned jagirs. They took active interest in politics.And when they came here they renewed their interests and activities, many of them had an eye on the jagirs and other properties of the Hindus and grabbed them. Imbued as he was with the glorious traditions of his motherland, Sheikh Nur-ud-Din could not be a party to this.

God is one, all religious are in their ultimate essence one. What is needed is a life of piety and purity, no matter what faith one follows. The prolonged course of penance and meditation upon which he embarked, had convinced him, apart from other things, of the truth of this fundamental basis of a good life and this also provided a solution to the riddle of his time He seems t0 have realised that the Kashmiris, precious heritage, so dear to him, which was sought to be destroyed by the outsiders, could be saved only by a happy "marriage" of the best in the old and the new, in the union of the Hindus and the Muslim into a common brotherhood, in their coexistence and cooperation and not in confrontation,, That is why he again and again calls upon the people, especially those come from outside and the zealots among the new converts, to live together with the Hindus in unison so that God himself would rejoice. He calls upon them to subdue the five senses, and get over the evils of kama, krodha, lobha, moha and ahankara to achieve the highest-to make union with Shiva- reminding them that mere lowering of the fleshy body would not save them. He calls upon the people not to go to priests and mullahs , not to shut themselves up in places of worship;or forests but "to enter thine own body with

breath controlled, in communion with God,"
(Keys to Kashmir; page 68).

Again and again he stresses the need for unity among Hindus and Muslims, God Himself would rejoice, he adds, if this happy consummation came about. it was for views such as these that Sheikh-ul-Alam has come to be designated Alamdar or standard-bearer of Kashmir.

But enlightened views such as the foregoing could not endear him to outsiders, most of whom were interested in getting hegemony over this beautiful land and possession of the Kashmiris,estates and properties. We know it from the contemporary historian Jonaraja that "Mala Nurdin", as he calls him,was imprisoned and put under restraint during Ail Shah's time. And Amin Kamil tells us how the Rishinamas reveal that outsiders were opposed to him and harassed him in many ways. But little daunted, he pursued in his enlightened course, as though to justify his title to being called Alamdar of Kashmir and all that Kashmir had stood for at its best, just as another great Kashmiri, Sheikh Mohammad Abdullah, now living amidst us, has proved to be a symbol of Kashmir's identity and distinctive personality in the years immediately before and after the country's independence.

The Sheikh's spiritual eminence and his humanistic philosophy made him the idol or favorite of the people of Kashmir. They flocked round him and some of them, modeled their lives on his pattern. These latter who came to be known as Rishis after him, were of great help and assistance to him in the stupendous task he had undertaken.

Rishis were by no means new to Kashmir. Rishis and Munis had been there among the Hindus from early antiquity some of them were there in Kashmir about his time also. But they worked mostly in isolation and independently of one another. To Nund Rishi belongs the credit of organising the Muslim Rishis into a well-knit order of Brotherhood, the unifying link being a common allegiance and devotion to the principles and ideals-simple living and high thinking, universal brotherhood and compassion, and service of humanity without considerations of caste or creed which he cherished.

In organising the new Order, Nund Rishi had before him the example of the Buddhist Sangha, which for centuries before the advent of Islam, had been such a prominent feature of the religious

and socio-cultural landscape of the valley. Like the Buddhist monks, the Rishis also did not marry; nor did they eat flesh. Like them again, they would not revile those not of their faith, and led simple, frugal lives, and tried to be source of benefit to the community at large. For this reason, the Brotherhood of Rishis may well be likened and even considered to be a descendant of the Buddhist Sangha or the Buddhist Order of Monks.

In this connection a most interesting fact that has recently come to light is recorded in Baba Khalil's Rishinama. In this work the author has ascribed a 2,500-verse Sanskrit work, Buddha-Charita, to Nund Rishi. According to Baba Khalil, the work was with him on his reemergence from a 12 years sojourn in a cave of Kaimoh on the ninth of Chaitra, a very sacred day in the Hindu calendar, both in Kashmir and the rest of India.

Since Baba Khalil was not conversant with Sanskrit, he has not been able to correctly assess the nature of the work or what it actually was. in truth it must have been the well-known Buddhist work, Buddha-Charita, which the Kashmiri savant kept with himself in this seclusion. And when after he had found the answer to the riddles and questions that had made him resort to severe penance and meditation in a cave, he reemerged into the workaday world, the great work on the Buddha's life and philosophy was with him In this connection it is interesting to note that another great work, Yoga-Vashista , was the solace of Sultan Zainul-Abidin Bud-Shah, the noblest ruler that Kashmir has ever known, in the closing embittered years of his life. And finally the great sage himself sang:

" that lalla of Padmanpor-she drank
her full of Divine nectar,
She was indeed an Avatar,
O God, grant me the self-same boon:"

J. N. Ganhar

SPIRITUAL TRENDS IN AND BEFORE SHEIKHUAL ALAM'S TIMES

The books on Kashmir history narrate that when Lalded the great hermit of Kashmir - chanced to see Hazrat Sayyid Shah-iHamdan - may God be pleased with him - passing through the street, who, in her hot haste to cover her naked body, plunged herself- when unable to get a cloth into a burning oven of a baker, who covered it up with its lid. She is reported to have said, when she tossed herself into the fire, "It is now unavoidably obligatory and necessary to give up nudity, to cover the body and be prepared regularly dressed, for a man- a man in the true sense -has arrived and appeared here on the scene". What we understand from these words of her's is that the people devoid of spiritual purity and moral divinity are woman-like feminish and feeble, womanish and week, frail and fragile and therefore they are woman in the metaphorical sense and that true and real manlines lies in working hard for spiritual attainments, moral elevation, Godly qualities and celestial heights. There must be no misunderstanding with regard to the fact that divine love's lobour can be undertaken both by a man and a woman alike. There is no ban or bar on one sex or the other. So says the Quran:-

"Whoevre works righteousness,
Man or woman and has Faith,
Verily to him will we give
A new life, a life
That is good and pure and we will bestow on such
their reward
According to the best of their actions".

(Abdullah Yousuf Ali's Translation)

Shakespeare said, "Frailty: Thy name is woman":, To me it appears that this frailty does not refer to her physical weakness

and bodily infirmity but to one's moral turpitude and spiritual deficiency, whether that " one " is masculine of feminine and this particular moral frailty of the individual man and woman is metaphorically called woman. And perhaps the same metaphorical meanings of the words man and woman are implied in the Tennysonian verse " Woman is the lesser man" But these sayings of Shakespeare and Tennyson can, even if these are accepted in their literal meanings of general truths, be excepted and our Lalded shall be deemed an honorable exception because, when the lid of the OVEN was removed, she was, to the surprise of all, found miraculously safe and secure, hale and healthy, happy and hilarious, smiling and shining, and seated and surrounded on all sides by blooming buds, fragrant and scent - diffusing flowers and roses- not nude and naked as when tossed into the fire but clad and clothed in fine robes.

In his verse, which quote herewith, has the well-known- Kashmie poet, Mahjoor, alluded to it..

Lal-i-mazh Yali bazras drayas
Shah -i- Hamadanin wuchh may zhhay
Mardas brinh kun par-i san ayas
Ravan Rayas Chhan-i-men may
(I, Lal, the mad, came out into open bazar
And Shah Hamdan's glimpse I got
Came duly clothed before the Sarkar
My love's labpi has been lost.)

And again, we have been told that when Hazrat-Shah-i- Hamadan- may god's blessings be upon him- entered the premises of the Shri Kali Mandir to propagate and preach his Islam among the Prohits and idol worshipers therein, there ensued between him and the chief Prohit, a heated discussion on the question of Mukti. The great Prohit, even vanquished, argued still and feeling himself losing ground very cleverly gave a turn to the disputation on spiritualism and miracles as the practical display of the spiritual power. He posed the boast that what the Prophet of Islam -may peace be upon Him- could perform only once in His life-time, the Prohit could perform any moment he liked. So saying, he flew up in the air and soared high in the sky to be visible to the naked eye. Hazrat Shah-i Hamdan was too formidable to be overawed by such a thaumaturgy and he cast his glance upon his shoes- a glance

alchemic in the same sense as in Kashmiri poet's verse Yami nazri zindgay janwar or in Hazrat Hafiz of Sheraz's verse:

"Ba-Nazar Kimya Kunand, Sag Ra Wali Kunand Magasara Huma Kunand", (An alchemic glance of a saint makes a saint of a dog and converts a fly into a phoenix.) As a result of the glance, the shoes took to flight up in the sky and accompanied the Mahantji in down flight. Thereupon the Mantheji embraced Islam then and there at the auspicious hands of Hazrat Shah -i- Hamdan and was a convert to Islamic way of theosophy and practice thereof. The posterity of this great native of ours is known by the corrupt form of Shahpor. The late historian, Mohammed-ud-din Fouq of Lahore has recorded it in his book "Mashahir-i-Kashmir".

These miracles of emerging from fire absolutely untouched and unharmed and of soaring high in the sky by no material means can be performed only by one who has attained spiritual power which is technically termed as " Sultan" in the Quran in the verse.

" Can Ye, O invisible and visible beings: merge out of and transgress the limits and boundaries of the earth and the heaven.

Ordinarily you cannot. Of course you can do so by naught except the Sultan the spiritual power." (Surah Rahman).

The Javid Nama of Hazrat Dr. Iqbal is, I can safely say, an exhaustive commentary of this very theory which has been set forth by the Quran.

Consider the Verses:

"Zindgi Juz Lazzat-i- Parwaz Nest
Ashyan Ba Fitrat-e-o- Saz Nayst."

(Life is nothing but to enjoy the spiritual flight. To rest in a nest is not congenial to life's nature).

" Guft Agar Sultan Tura ayad Badast
May Tawani Aflak Ra Darham Shikst.'

(if Sultan, the spiritual power is got at the heavenly spheres then you can shake and break)

Or as Haviz has put it:

"Tura ze Kungara-i- Arish May Zanand Safeer,
Namay Danam Darin Damgah Chi Uftad Ast."

(Thou art a divine bird - Tair-i- Lahoti. How have you fallen in this snare of the world of water and mud, lust and passion and from the very highest pinnacle of God's
Throne they whistle you to soar and fly).

The two miracles of the Mahantji and Lalded are a chapter

of our FOLKLORE. These are at the tips and tongues of Kashmiri people and so popular by way of traditions that it is rather difficult to believe the same. These miracles not only indicate but clearly prove that there did exist some sort of spiritual form which the Mahantji and Lalded displayed and made a show thereof. and it must be borne in mind, for the sake of relevance, that the time of Shah-i- Hamdan, Lalded and the historical MAHANTJI was just a prelude to time, to the conditions, to the ways and means and to the trends which prevailed in the time of Hazrat Sheikh-i-ul- Alam, who was born just towards the close of the time of Shah-u-Hamdan and Lalded. His time followed that of the great two without an interval in between and it must, therefore, be admitted that before the great Sheikh saw the light of the world, aspirations for piety, nobility, moral refinement and spiritual enlightenment, spiritualists and saints and hermits must have existed and did exist - and the people here were generally spiritually- minded, mentally disposed and naturally inclined towards animation, ennobling the living and making life sublime and divine. It is from this generally common level of piety, that there always cropped up men more devoted and divine, more hermit and holy, more religious and refined and they being in good numbers caused Kashmir to be known as Reshi-Wayr or Pir-i- Wayr. Here a very pertinent question can be asked. The question is as to how and why is it that the Kashmiri people have generally been as such. The answer to this question will be comprehensible when we properly consider the fact that Din, which means devotion to God had two factors, viz Zikr-ul lah- Yad-i-Khuda and the other Fikr-i-Ayat -u-Qudrat-ul-lah. Both Zikr and Fikr are the instruments of the achievement of purity and holiness of soul and spirit and have been set forth everywhere and greatly emphasized upon by the Holy Quran in a large number of verses. I recite one:

"Behold In the creation of the heavens and earth, and the alternation of the Day and Night, there are, indeed, signs for people of understanding those who (celebrate the praises of God) remember Him standing, sitting and lying down on their sides and contemplate the creation (the wonders of creation) in the heavens and earth uttering in utter surprise: "Our lord, not for naught hast Thou created all this, glory to Thee, give us salvation from the penalty of the Fire (Al Imran).:

Of the two, Fikr, i.e. meditation, is the most essential one for it

is condusive to Zikr-ullah, remembering God-rather it contains in itself and is part and parcel with Zikr because Zikr is the direct remembering of God and Fikr is to meditate upon God's Qudrat. His omnipotence, His Signs and is therefore indirect remembrance of His. Meditation over His Sifat implies, as can readily be accepted, indirect remembrance of His Zaat, His Person, His Self. But Fikr which means to meditate upon, to ponder over, to observe minutely, to study, to discern must have, being a transitive verb, an object and that object is this world, this whole universe-every bit of it and every thing in it.

Khol Ankh, Zamen Dekh, Falak Dekh, Faza Dekh,
Mashriq se ubharte Huae Suraj Ko Zara Dekh,
Os Jalwa-i- Bepardah Ko Pardon Main chhupa Dekh,
Ayyam-i- Judai Ke Sitam Dekh, Jafa Dekh,
Yi Gumbad -i- Aflak, Yih Khamosh Fazain,
Yih Koh, Yih Sahra, Yih Samandar, Yih Hawain,
Aina-i- Ayyam Main Aj Apni Nazr Dekh

Then whole creation is the manifestation of God. Though (Parddun Ma chopa), yet he is Be Parda unveiled, vivid, visible in everything of His creation.

Hazrat Maulana Abdul Rahman Jami put it thus:

" Jahan Mirat-i- Musne-. Shad-e- Zat
Fashahid Wajhahu Fi Jame-i- Zarrat"

(The universe is a mirror reflecting the beauty of the Great Person. So observe His omnipresent Self in each and every particle.)

Perhaps Jami has borrowed the idea from his great master Attar's verse.

"Yar Bepardah Az Dar-e- Dewar
Dar Tajjallist Ya Colil Abasar,"

(Translation: O people of Insight: The Friend is reflected in every construction and creation)This has well been amplified by Hazrat Iqbal in verses like :

"To Jisko Dhondta Hay Taron Ki Khamoshi Main
Peshedah Hay wuh Shayad Ghwcha-i- Zindgi Main
Istadah Sarw Main Hay, Sabzah Main Soraha hay Bulbul
Main Naghmahzan Hay khamosh Hay Kali Main A Main
tujee Dikha don rukhsar-i- roshan oska
Nahron Ke Aine Main, Shabnam Ki arsi main
Sahra-o- dasht-u- dar Main, Kohsar Main wuhi hay
Insan Key dil main, tere rukhsar main wuhi hay

God is (Husn-i- Bay Parwah) is fully expressed and exposed in woods and forests:

Husn-i- bay pardah ko apni bay jijabi kay liay
Houn agar Shahroun say ban piyaray to shar achhay ki ban

Thus the study of one dumb eloquent deodar tree, standing tall, majestic, graceful and elegant, can impart more knowledge about God, refine the student in a greater way than a teacher of natural sciences (Uloom Zahiri) and guide in mental and spiritual sciences (Uloom Batini). Is not the poet perfectly right in what he has said or was he overtaken by ecstasy when he said:

"One impulse from a vernal wood
May teach you more of man
Of moral evil and of good
Than all the sages can."

To Wordsworth:

"Meadow, grove and stream.
The oath and common sight did seem
Apparelled in celestial light
The glory and the freshness of a dream
Often, when on his couch he did lie
In vacant or pensive mood,
That Nature flashed upon that inwards eye
Which is the bliss of solitude
And then his heart with pleasure fills
And dances with the daffodils
And again
His heart would leap up when he would behold
A rainbow in the Sky
The sounding of a cataract haunted him like a passion".

Hafiz in his excess of love for the Omnipotent and the most Perfect Creator and Designer, in his maniacal love, intellectual stupor, moral stupification, pure amazement and holy astonishment got and comprehended from the beautiful designs and dumb confounding patterns of the universe- lost himself in its ecstasy and yearned to sacrifice himself at the alter of the Holy pen of the Omnipotence of the Great Designer- -The Almighty God.

Thus he sang:

"Khez ta ba Kilk-i- un naqqash jan afsahn kunem
Kin hamah naqsh-e- ajabbar gardish-e- parkar dasht.:

(Get up so that we sacrifice our lives over the pen of the Designer

who has produced all these wonderful patterns in rotating His compasses.)

One can say that the steep and lofty cliffs, the meadows, the woods, the mountains and all that we behold from the green earth, the cataracts, the waterfalls, the lakes, the groves, the streams, rivers, varieties of flowers and roses of different hues and colours the sun, the moon, the stars, the clouds, the rainbow, the showers of rain, the flakes of snow, birds, beasts, brute, man-the crown of its phenomenons and everything is worth contemplation, meditation, speculation, calls for close observation. It is really a book to read and to study and through it or in it is worthwhile to know, to see the Almighty Creator, His wonderful art, His perfect workmanship, His beauty, His grace, His grip and grasp of the universe, His hold over all, how He is encompassing in and with every particle, atom, His omnipotence, His omnipresence in and with every thing and yet being hidden from everything and to see His Holy self - see and be dumb confounded, go into ecstasy and excitement and exclaim: "Our Lord not for naught hast Thou created all this" (Al- Quran, sura Al-i-Imran).

Mufti Jalal-ud-din.

RISHI-CULT OF KASHMIR

Rishi- cult of Kashmir cannot be isolated from the main cultural stream of India, because the Rishi- cult shares the same values and the eternal tradition which have prevailed during the vedic Age and in Upanishadic era. The Rishis have created such a spiritual environment and discipline which is generally known as the golden age in the history of India. The Rishi-cult is a synthetic development of Kashmir. The socio-spiritual rise of this cult clearly indicates that it is a reflection of age old composite and integral heritage of the ancient Indian culture which extends its borders from Kanya Kumari to Kashmir. The available literature of the cult is itself a testimony of the fact that the mode of thinking of these Rishis has remained about the same as we find among the Rishis of Upanishadic period. In the Upanishadic period sage-wife Maltriya was the leading person who led a movement in the Indian Rish-cult and exhorted them to be away from the crowded cities and towns for contemplation[1]. This is why we find that all the sages, seers and philosophers of this age settled down in the secluded forests to be in communion with nature. These sages established different Ashrams for congenial atmosphere and attainment of self-realisation. The same socio-spiritual phenomenon has persisted in the ancient Rishi culture of Kashmir[2]. Like the Indian sages, the sages of Kashmir too moved to forests and secluded places where access of the crowd was difficult[3]. This kind of socio-spiritual renunciation is common among the Rishis of India and Kashmir[4]. This leads us to the conclusion that the patterns of the movement and approaches of thought in India and Kashmir must have remained the same.

Linguistically, the word "Rishi" is the derivation of the Vedic tradition,[5]. Which means the seer of the supreme truth and keeping in view the status of Rishi in the spiritual field, he was highly

venerated. The astonishing fact is that a learned Brahman did not dare to discuss with a Rishi[6]. In the Indian culture the status of a Rishi is considered above caste, creed and religion[7]. If we assess the available biographical data caste of investigated characteristic peculiarities of the Rishi-cult of Kashmir, it will show soio-spiritual similarities with India. This historical development admits the fact that the pattern of technique of the Rishi movement must have been the same. In their prime effort the universality and humanistic conscious approach has remained predominant, though geographically both were distant. The history of Rishi-cult is definitely an ancient development of India. Undoubtedly this Rishi-cult has played a very important role in the formation of the spiritual history of Kashmir, even the later historical changes which occurred after 13th century could not disturb it. The radiant personality of these Rishis has always remained popular for their kind and sympathetic treatment. Their popularity was so great that in the local dialect Kashmir cam eto be known the Rishi-Var.(Sanskrit Rishi Vat, in Kashmir linguistics /T/ usually changes into /R/ so and finally the Marpho-form has become /Var/ which means the garden of sages. The influence of Rishis was so much that still Kashmiri Hindus and Muslims retain their surname Rishi. The surprising evidence of this fact is still alive in Kashmiri language that the Rishi of higher rank is known Rishi-Mol, in Vedic context it is Rishi-Moule[8] means "crown of the sages".

In the Rishi literature certain aspects are of vital significance, but no attention has been paid to the exposition of these aspects. The verses of the Rishi deal with a number of names of Rishis and the nomenclatures of places. This kind of description invites a special attention, especially towards the geography of Kashmir, and to some extent the biographic sketch of the Indian Rishis. The manner and the technique in which the Rishi literature is narrated belongs to age old tradition and is similar to the narration of Ramayana[9] and Mahabharata[10].

In this paper an effort is made to trace these cultural links which have so far been overlooked and are not generally known. It is really unfortunate that in Kashmir the cult-followers did not furnish the verses of Rishi-cult to Sir Temple and Dr. Greirson when they came to Kashmir and expressed their eagerness to collect them and publish them. Had they been furnished with the verses, the verses would have received nation-wide publicity and would have been

known in India as the sayings or Vákha of Lal-Deda.

In the available verses of the Kashmiri Rishi-cult, we cannot state with certainty that these verses have come down to us in their original form. there are certain linguistic Neo-Marpho forms-which testify that linguistic corruption and interpretation have crept into these verses. This aspect will be discussed when we deal with the linguistics and verse- structure of Rishi-cult. The cultural linkages are first taken into account.

Example1

Dandkaa Vanukis Jalkaa Rishis
(Rishi- naama)
(The sage Jalkaa Rishi of Dandakaa forest)

In this line of the verse two words are of great importance and they are Jalka- Rishi and Dandakaa forest. Dandakaa is the anomenclature of a forest which is in South India and is linked with the early history of India. Shri Rama, the God incarnation, had a long stay in the forest of Dandak when he was exiled. According to Ramayana[11]. Janka, the father-in law of Shri Rama, had settled in Dandaka, forest for self-mortification[12]. Saint Janka, in the spiritual history of India is considered a renowned Rishi. In Kashmiri linguistics alike Indo- Aryan Prakrit the nasal/N/ metathesis into /L/. Just as Sanskrit/ Shring in 'stag' but in Kashmiri\ Haangul /,the colsing letter is evident like\ Janka\ into\Jalaka./ Let us accept the notion that Dandaka was a name of a particular place of Kashmir also. But its historicity comes under the mainstream of Indian culture and we should not ignore this fact that Kashmiris in ancient times tried to create mini cultural symbols in their own and they came to have their own Ganga, Godaavarii, Pushkar and so many of the Indian shrines.

Example II

Prannaabhaasii Palaas Rishis
(Rishi-Nama)
(Sage Plaas, who had controlled his breath.)

Rishi Palaas is none else than Rishi Poulasty, the father of Raavan and Kuber. Vaalmiiki,[13]. the author of the great epic of Ramayana places Rishi Poulastya in the first row of Indian sages. Here in this line the two words Praan and Abhyaasii clearly reflect ancient yoga-shaastra whose traces are found in Mo- han Jo- Daro and Harappa[14]

Example III

Tamii Huzarat Ruma Rishis
Maz Svergas Arzun Jaay
(Noor Naamaa)
The same Rama Rishi, who occupied the place in the heaven

The sage Ruma or Lomash is identified in the Upanishad are with great reverence[15]. In Kashmiri linguistics the letter /L/ interchanges into/R/ for instance, Sanskrit (Lavanga (Clove) but in Kashmiri 'Rong' (clove). In pouraanic version the sage Lomasha or Romasha had a long span of life[16]. In Kashmiri society if one is blessed with longevity, he is believed to have the age of Ruma Rishi i.e. "Ruma Roshun Aay" which literally means Ruma Rishi's long life.

Example IV *Bogi Prikhat Barats Rishis*
Chhum Chitas Chhu Muukh Divaan
oh God' thou appeared to sage Bharta, I am sure that thou alone bestows final liberation

Bharatahari was a well known king in the history of India, the recorded events reveal that Bharatahari in his youth wrote Shringoar Shataka, the romance of the youth. In his kingship he composed successfully suggestion for an administrator in his Niitishatak. Finally he left the throne and wrote Vairaagya Shatak, the sour experience of the worldly life and laid down principles of the doctrines of renunciation.

The above mentioned examples of the verses throw light on this main source of the Rishi-cult and though the geographical distance has certainly been there but the cultural heritage has been shared equally from time to time. What Kashmir has contributed to the heritage of India is undoubtedly great. Besides its contribution to Sanskrit literature, poetics, philosophy and so many aspects, Kashmir has given the art of historigraphy to India.

Keeping in view the great cultural development of India as well as Kashmir, the existence of Rishi cult can be said to be a continuous link of great vedic tradition which still reflects in the rishi-cult of this valley. There cannot be two opinions about the fact that this age old spiritual tradition of Kashmir was disturbed by repeated turmoils arising out of the ingress of the Saadaats of central Asia, who were intolerant of the Rishi-cult because the Rishis never accepted their spiritual authority.

The philosophic doctrines of the Rishi-cult are monastic in the practice and theory.

Chaalum Chuy Vuzmal tu Treto
Chaalum Chuy Mandinas gatakaar
Chaalum Chuy Pan Kodun greto
Chaalum Chuy Khyon Vunhith gear
Chaalum Chuy Prabatas Karini ato
Chaalum chuy athas narr

To bear the concept of spirituality, it is to face lightening and thunder, it is to tolerate complete darkness in the mid-day, it is to jump into a mill-stone and to face grinding ones own being, it is to eat poison, it is to lift, a mountain with the force of arms, it is to bear burning fire on one's palm.

The spiritual subtlety- in the verses of Rishis, is highly superb and scientific. They in their exposition, are conscious, especially the reality of this universe, that is why they do not Propound mythological beliefs which often are narrated about the manifestation of the creation.In their thinking they are alike Albert Eistien, although very ahead to him, but akin to his application of relative-theory.

Agaad Abode agan ano
Undaa yendan daah Hyeyi
Charth an Chandraah zanvaano
Saadah Pe-ii Sahzaa Kurli
(Noor Naamaa)
Sanskritii-Panditti kalaam)

Thou try to understand that this existing cosmic universe is like an unfathomable and unintelligible energy and in this stream of consciousness perceiving facilities of senses are cremated, you comprehend this all in your knowledge and as soon as you taste this the instant realization will be attained.

In fact, this verse echoes the conscious exposition of the Shivite philosophical lore, the only difference being that while the Shivite lore is in Sankrit, the essence is the same.

"Mahaa Shunnyaalayo Vahnou
Bhuntaaks Vishyaadkam"
(Vijnan Bhairava)

In this infinite conscious level in the verses of Rishi cult is definitely very high and superb, it is because of its subtilty the Rishi-cult does not emphasis ritualistic religion. According to the Rishi ritual is sectarian, therefore, it cannot be useful in final liberation.

Antah Kaliinii Chitan Peii
Par Parikaashia Tariydan poshi
tat Prikaash Antah Volusii
Svaadaah Peie Sahzaa Karii
(Noor Naamaa)
(Sanskriti-Panditi Kalaam)

"The external faculties will not bring forth real concept of spirituality, it can be achieved only when you contemplate consciously within your own integral self, in this way you will obtain the real understanding of your own real being, on this state of awareness you will cross all the three limitations, namely the state of wakefulness, dreaming and deep slumber and here- after the blissful fourth stage of Turiyaa, which being above time and space, will be achieved by you, as soon as you taste this the instant realization will be attained.

"Turiiyaa,"fourth stage of yoga, in the spiritual culture of India and also in the Sxhivism of Kashmir is highly significant since its spiritual exposition is vast, it has received attention of the commentators of Vedanta and Shivism. In yoga,it is said that the immortality is attained when one attains this spiritual goal.

The fulfillment of real being is within one's own existence, unfolding the same divine concept saint Nunda Rishi says:

Muulan Tal Chhu Bodu Naraaddaa
Dodurange amsit suuty tar
Karshan Bu akh Aasan Vaada
Darshana Kaasi Vonduch thur
(Noor-naama)

Underneath its root is a large spring filled with milky nector," I" intentful of spiritual bliss, in return of its recognition shall escape the fear of birth and re-birth.

In the above mentioned verse of line "Muulantal Chhus Bud naagaadaa"is of great significance as it reflects the Taantric doctrine of Kundalinii yoga, The word/Mullan Tal/is the linguistic form of Sanskrit /Muulaadhaar-tala/ and /Naaga/means spring or serpent. In the doctrines of Tantra the placement of the Kundalinii (Serpent power) is located below the naval, its colour is white and one who awakens it attains the taste of the Nector which leads to immortality. This surprising s similarity with the Shaakta-cult, the cult which has been the original philosophy of Kashmir right from B.C. 900 was sustained by the Rishi-cult. The above mentioned Rishi verse

is the exact translation of the pachas- tavii, the text of the Shaakta-cult.

"Muuloal Vaala Kuharoat Uditoa Bhovaain"
(Panchastavi 6/4.)

Kundalinii (serpent power) springs out Mulaadhaar (the central place of the spiritual awareness) and after having the taste of nector of self recognition and when it again enters the same place.

Rishi philosophy does not believe that self-realization can be attained with the performance of religious and ritual rites. It is the continuous concentrated effort which alone can be the course of self-liberation.

"Raats Dohas Svori Panuny Paan"
"One who pursues his own real self day and night"

Rishis of Kashmir alike Shivites, uphold the opinion firmly that the salvation is not possible through the existence of the incarnations and prophets. In Shivite outlook Shiva himself in his own spontaneous free-will manifests entire universe and he alone sustains this colourful objective comes like the peacock's off.

Shiva Chhu Zaal Vaahravith
Che chhu marun trihrun kath
Paanu manzu paan Kadal Charith koth.

"It is the net of the Shive which spreads over to the entire universe, you mortal, why you still tremble in fear, If you do not die while you are alive, oh, then what is the object of death,. You do conscious selection and try to trace out your own immortal self."

Paanu Yd Pakakh Tava adu lasakh
Natu ho korumutuuy haa raave
(noor Naama)

"The self effort alone can provide self-recognition, in case this is not done whatever done is certainly lost."

Rishies propounded their thesis like Shivite philosophers, the only difference which kept them separate, was the language. One section expressed itself in Sanskrit while the other section gave its exposition in Kashmiri. The remarkable resemblance can be seen in Shiva-Suutra which claims in the same tone/Udyamo Bhairva/, the positive self-effort is the way to know one's own-self.

Shaivaism unlike the doctrines of Vedanta affirms that the existing totality of the universe is integral with subjectivity and is unitarian in its manifestation. The preamble of the Shaivaism declares /Vishva maya/and /Vishva Uttiira/, pointedly refers to

'within the conscious universe', and 'beyond the conscious universe.: It is clear that school of philosophy does not share the opinion of Vedaanta which believes that the creative manifestation of this external universe is nothing but illusion. The followers of the Rishi-clut were the outcome of this cultural synthesis who in their local dialect more appealing to the people preached it to common masses of Kashmiris. Sociologically it is obvious that the doctrines of this philosophy have always been propagated in two forms, one for upper class of the society, which uses classical language and another for the common people, for whom it was transmitted in their mother tongue. In fact, such sociological behaviour is still prevalent and is observed at Chaari- Sharief, the greatest shrine of the Rishi-tradition where Hindus and Muslims equally pay their homage and where the Persianalised verses are generally recited inside the shrine while for the common people the original Kashmiri verses are sung.

Yus Chhu Yeti Su Chhu Tattii
Su Chhu Prith Jaayi Ratith than
Su Chhu Padatti Su Shhu Rathii
Su Chhu Soruy gupith Panun Paan

He, who, is in this subjective universe, He, who is in the objective universe, who exists everywhere Himself, He who sometimes travels on foot, He who sometimes rides on coach himself, He, who, himself being omnipresent, is hidden in His supreme-self.

It is Parama Shiva, the supreme being, who, in his spontaneous desire ascends and descends in his cosmic consciousness.

Zevaan Paanu tu Maraan panu
Ivaan Panu tu Nivaan Thku
(Noor Naamaa)

He himself takes the birth and then dies, he himself ascends and descends in this stream of consciousness.

The Hermitess Laladeda also expressed the same feelings prior to Saint Nuud Rishi:

Shivas Sorinu zyon tu marun
Ravas Sorinu Ata-gath

"The transmigration of Shiva will never cease as the rising and setting of the sun will never come to an end. The cycle of universal phenomenon will be everlasting and always in action.'

The Pritybhijnan - Suutra of Saivism claims/ Tadbhumikaah[17] Sarva-darshan sthitayg/ that the creative existence of subjective

and objective universe is the sweet spontaneous will of Parama-Shiva himself. Rishis also re-echo/ Suuy asith maali Assaan Chhuy/ that this whole existence exists because of his existence.

After assessing the promise of spiritual doctrines of Rishi-cult, it becomes more important to examine the rudiments of the presedy of the Rishi-verses. It cannot be presumed that each metric expression which is generally classified as padas, Vaakhas and Shrukhas, is a sudden development of 13th and 14th century in the literary field of Kashmiri language. To clear any doubt, it will be safer to examine the literatureof Kashmiri language. The oral tradition of any world literature is evident of this fact that it has come down from generation to generation. The Kashmiri cannot be isolated from it. So far the history of Kashmir literature is concerned it goes back to 7th century A.D., supporting evidence in this connection is available to us in the Shivite-text of 10th century A.D. This is the great Abhinow Gupta who mentions the name of Chhummapada in his book Tantraalok[18].the question arises who were the followers of the Chhumma cult and what had been their socio-spiritual identity? According to the authentic statement of Abhinov Gupta[19], the worldwide renowned Shivite philosopher of 10th century A.D. the Chumma cult has been the nomenclature of this cult. The followers of this cult preached the Shivite lore in the local dialect. In his statement Abhinov Gupta admits that the spiritual discipline of this cult remained very tough. this cannot be ruled out that this cult must have been very popular among the common masses of Kashmir. This is presumed that the mass popularity must have yielded to Abhinovgupta to place them in his master minded book of Tantraaloka, otherwise Sanskrit scholars have generally ignored such crossing reference.

The Chhumma Verses are the oldest archives of the available Kashmiri literature. In their linguistic manner they are sensible to Sraymbhuu Munis Poum-Chariu the literary work of the 7th century A.D.The morpheme of the Chhumma-padas and the linguistic structure is, indeed, a great treasure of ancient Kashmir language. Its various manuscripts are available:, one is preserved in Research Manuscript Library of Jammu and Kashmir Government. The structural linguistics of the chhmma-verses after the testification of its Micro linguistic treatment, infact, shows that it must be the language of 7th and 8th century A.D. The language of the Chhumma can be prepared only with the language of Shitikantta's Mahaanaya-

prakaash which Sir Greirson, a noted scholar, had placed in the15th century. We are fortunate to have two important creative works of the 13th century, namely, the "Boanaasurkatha"of Butt Avataar and Sukh-dukh charit" of Butt Ganak. If at all we believe Sir Greirson about the date of Mahanaya Prakaash but the language of these two creative works of 15th century does not correspond with the language of Mahaanaya. Even the language of Mahaanaya does not correspond to the language of the Rishi-cult. In fact the comparative study of the language of Mahaanay Prakaash, can be done only with the verses of Chhumma, so the age of Mahaanaya Prakaash must be in between 8th and 9th century A.D.not of 15th century A.D. What has really happened is that Sir Greirson has never seen the verses of Rishi cult nor has he gone through the Baanaasurkatha and Sukh-dukha charita, the creative literary works of 15th century. Both the authors have referred to the name of king of their contemporary age.

Somehow, our attempt is in no way to discuss here the linguistics of Kashmir, and to collect the history of Kashmiri literature but to investigate the pattern of the verification and its prosodic treatment which reflects the closing rhyme and rhythm. Generally Chhymma verses are known as pada, a connotation of the Mahaanaya-Prikaasha but Laladeda's verses are named Vaakhyas while the verses of Rishi cult are known as Shrukhays. The prosodical formation and the applied technique of the metre of the Chhumma-pada, Mahaanaya-Pad, Laladeda Vaakhyas and Rishi Shrukhyas, are the same and there is the same metric treatment in their expression. It needs a bold step to unveil this self created illusion and also demands a careful but thorough investigation or analyse it with reference of the metrical development, composition and the technique of its execution among the Kashmiri verses. It is sheer ignorance to speculate that this traditional metric development influenced the later composition of Kashmiri poetry. Here the attempt will be made to show the continuity in this metric expression.The examples from the Chhumma-Pada:

1. *Yeh gath Buve vedich akamkume*
Ner avakaash Padpeavante
Agaad kath no chen pan pavante

"Such kind of conscious state will be achieved by you without any technique. You simply go ahead into it, you see, automatically the state of recognition will embrace you. I am not preaching you a

big task, oh, you will realise this blessful within your own self ".

II. *Vegalith hani Ashun Svaruup*
Ayedi Padaarath Sunty kavalith
Vechchii yyodu arth Prikhteth

After the ignorance is melted the real being will be clear to you, this objective material universe will appear like a manifestation of subjective universe. The stream of consciousnes will bestow you the real recognition.

In the first and second verse of Chhumma-Pada, the composing technique of the metre is akin to the Prakrit.It is the continued association and influence of the Parakrit metre, known as Duuhaa, which is similar to Kashmir in its prosodical rhyme and rhythm. This we have to admit that in Kashmiri literature its applied technique has remained different but the general feature has remained the same. In the Praakrit the closing rhyme of the first line corresponds with the rhyme of the second line, while in Kashmiri prosody the closing rhyme of the first line corresponds with the closing rhyme of the third line and the closing rhyme of the second line associates with the closing rhyme of the fourth line. The metric harmony of the verse is constituted like this:.

Example 1

1. Ame 2. Anete
3. Ame 4. Ant

Example II

1. UUP 2. ETH
3. UUP 4. ETH

Now, let us examine the metric composition of Mahaanaya Prakaash in a comparative estimate of the technique of the Chhumma Pada.

Example III.

Akul Chhot viyaapak Bodaarn
Kulgat Ahli Shattu gummun
Ganthi chk addaar Vidaarn
Sas niik ruup akkia vizayuum

"He, who is beyond the birth and rebirth. No one can dare to claim his supermacy. He who is himself the stream of consciousness, the letters from A to Ha are no imposition to articulate His real form. This phenomenal cycle of the universe is His own manifestation, He alone exists everywhere victoriously.

The metric harmony of the verse is constituted like this:

Example IV.

1. Aarn 2. Uun
3. Aarn 4. Uun

Here in this verse the metric composition embodies the same technique as it does in the Chhumma pada. Now, let us examine the vakhyas of Laldeda.

ExampleV.

Aami Paun Sadras naavi chhes lamaan
Kati bozi daya myon meti diyi Taar
Aamyen Taakyen pony chhum Srravaan
Zuv chhum Brimaun gachu He gaar

'I', in this ocean of smasara, am pulling my boat with yarn, will the Mahaadeva (almighty) listen to my prayers and will ferry me across. These worldly attachments which duly come into conceivable senses, but to me, these oozing out from my unbaked earthen plate, so my conscious soul is eager to set for my real home."

1. Aan 2. Taar
3. Aan 4. Taar.

Example VI

Pronis Tansuuy Mulul daag gom
Zaag gom Nirith Baagu Andruriay
Haarunis Taapas Poh tu Maag gom
Faag gom Niirith Haru Bindriay

My castle's real being is infinite but in the human form, this is trained with these worldly attachments. because of this my awareness has left my garden. I, being the integral part of supreme being, possessed energetic heat of haar (Indian calandaric months approximate to June-July, the month of Haar is the hottest in Kashmir, this is reflected in the proverb/ haaruny grekh/ the boiling temperature of Haar) but because of this mortal life, it has changed into Poh and Maag (The Indian calendaric months approximate to January -February, these are the coldest months of Kashmir, the folk song of Kashmiri reflects it like this /Poh Maag Heri yoth Kanya gayem tan/ the months of Poh and Maag have come down and my body has turned to stone), and, I being in this state of carelessness the merryment of Faagun (The Indian calendric month approximate of February-March).Since, I could not participate in the colourful festival of Holi, which is played in the Vrindaavan along with Lord Krishna.

Metric harmony of the Rishi-verse is constituted like Chhumma-

Pada Mahaanaya Pada, Laladeda-Verse:

1. Om 2. Aiy
3. Om 4. Aiy

Batta Avataara,the court post of the king Zain ul-Abdeen of Kashmir, has also composed the same pattern his "Baanaasur-kathaa."

Shunith Venubaandan Baans
Anuth Magith Nyuth Vinaash
Yadu Maha dush yi Paans
Chal Diivas affuvachun Mu Baash

"Kubanda, the Minister of king Baana heard all that the king stated to him, then he replied why he had unnecessarily invited this destructive war, suddenly the king Banna checked him that he must not speak much ominous words.

Here also the metric harmony is constituted like that in the Chhumma Padas.

1. Aans 2. Aash
3. Aans 4. Aash

The romantic poetess of Kashmir, Habbaakhaatun, also has followed the same metrical technique in her expression,.

Meho Koruy chekyut fomb mayaan
Haa Aziizo, Zuuni Mo Chu Rosh
Khotuni Pari Puuri Saamaan
Chhaaw Myenii Daniay Posh

I have decorated cotton bed for you , Oh my beloved Aziz, Do not sulk away from your beloved zuun, I have adorned, come and enjoy my bloom, which is as radiant as a pomegranate flower.

Metric harmony of Habbaakhatun is built in the Chumma etc., tradition:

1. Aan 2. Osh
3. Aan 4. Osh

Saahib Kaul, the great mystic poet of Kashmir of 17th century A.D.also followed the same techinque of the prosody in his expression:

Goras Tan man dan dizi
Goras Paripari yel tay
Guru darshu karizi
Goras Bali bali haary Yatry

Be devotee of your precepter in your body, mind and wealth, surrender everything to your master, and be sacrificed for he master.

Here too, the metric harmony is constituted as the Chhumma pada.

1. Izi 2. Ay
3. Izi 4. Ay

Rupudeda. the great mystic poetess of 17th century also adopted the same prosodical technique in her expression. She must have adopted the tradition from Laladeda and Nunda Rishi:-

Garith Sumarith jnaanaa kodum
Paarud morum Toviay Suntya
Punch agnnalaal Chdovume
Gaash Prezulovum Taviay Suntya

"I searched for knowledge with great careful devotion, and I subdued the mercury with it, I set fire to five conceivable senses and illuminated my real being within me."

Here too, the metric harmony is constituted on the same lines as Chhumma-Pada.,

1. Um 2. tya
3. Um 4. tya

Shah Gafoor, the well known poet of Kashmir, has also followed the same pattern in this metric composition:

Akaashi Samandar Man Chhaavunaavum
Vaaru dapanaavum Buuy chhus su
Kan dith Sokhunun gachi Manno Chhaarun
Daarnaayi Daarun So ham-su

"in the infinite ocean of this sky, one has to leave the concept of finite and to make recognition that I am and I alone, am, one has to exert and search out the meaning of the reality of the soul".

In this verse, the metric harmony is also constituted on the same traditional pattern as that of the Chhumma-Padas.

1. Un 2. Su
3. Un 4. Su

The Rishi verses, though very popular among the people of Kashmir with their socio spiritual solace, remained unpublished for a long time. Repeated efforts were made from time to time for their publication but the custodians of these verses were not in a mood to permit an access to the common people who had blind faith in these custodians. The caretakers of the Rishi verses were in two minds.

First they were apprehending that if they lost the hold of the Rishi literature their supremacy would be altogether neglected. Second, the recitation of these verses was the chief source of their

income, so in both the ways, they were feeling insecure of their vested interests. Sir Temple, a noted western scholar also tried but like the earlier Researchers he too failed. After a long time the native publishers somehow could get hold of the verses but unfortunately the manuscripts which they found were persioised and very little contents were in Kashmiri, still the credit must be given to them as they did break the ice. Finally, a noted Kashmiri poet and literary critic, Shri Amin Kamil dared to plunge in this field, knowing that the success in this aspect was difficult. It is an admitted fact that this task took him a long time to go through the various manuscripts. After long efforts the collection of Rishi verses was brought out in the form of "Noor-Naama". Professor Amin Kamil, undoubtedly, is the first Kashmiri scholar, who with his talent, could understand its historicity and continuous texture of the Rishi verses. The editor of "Noor-Naama", furnished us with three types of Rishi verses of which the linguistic marpho-forms are at different periods. This kind of linguistic specimens is an eye opener especially for the linguists who appreciate what it means in linguistic-science. Such developments essentially demand a linguistic periodisation on the basis of diochronic linguistics. It is a wonder that all the three marphoforms varying in their synchroric phonetics and synchronic phonemics. No doubt, such available linguistic specimens can easily refute those who have so far compiled the history of Kashmiri literature. Here it is not aimed to discuss comparative historical linguistics. But such attempts would certainly unfold all the misconceptions which are still persistent in literature about Kashmir. A study of the three linguistic morpho form would unveil many otherwise hidden links in the ancient heritage of Kashmir.

References;

1. Neelmata Purana: 90.91.92. 1240. 1345.1354.
2. Nseelmata Purana: 1407
3. Neelmata Purana:17.25.89.92.
4. Neelmata Purana:1407
5. Rigveda:1.1.2.,1.45.3.,8.43.
6. Rigveda:10.10.39.14.
7. Rigveda:1.130.6.,5.2.11.,5.29.15.,
8. Vitasta:P.G.Hindi Department K.U. NO 10.P,23
9. Vaalmiiki: Sargas 3.6.7.9.16.19.
10. Mahaa Bhaarta:Vana-Parva, Doumya, Parva:;

11. Vaalmiiki Ramayana: Dandka Sarga
12. Vaalmiiki ramayan: Dandaka Sarga
13. Vaalmiiki Ramayana:Dandaks Sarga
14. Sir John Marshall: Mohenjo Daro Vol.1,102.
15. Rigveda; 1.126; 9,10,163.6.
    Athrava-Veda 2.33.7.,
16. MahaBharta; 1.140.89
17. KhemRaja; Pritbhihjna Hridaya
18. Abhinow Gupta; Tantralok Vol II p.26.29
19. Praakrita Paingalam p.61.

T.N.Ganjoo

NUNDA RISHI AND LALL-DED

Ocean of Eternal Happiness and Bliss
The object of Devotion with a real form:
Physical and Non-physical;
Pervading everywhere, lord of life,
Full of Glorious light:
The God Almighty: ...... Kala-Sutra.

The mount of Chrar (Tsrar) where the monumental memorial of the Saint, Standard-Bearer of Kashmir, Nunda- Rishi stands at present, was an abode of a Naga Bhairava, during pre-historic times. At the site stood a big pine tree, by the side of a corn field. It was looked after by a priest, who happened to live in a neighbouring village. He used to come on every bright sixth of month to the Tirtha, to do Puja as well as collect the offerings made by the devotees to the Naga Bhairava, who was called Vana-Devta by the villagers. A little away from the site, there was a wooden platform of logs that served as a meeting place of the way-farers, from the surrounding villages.

The place was accessible by a much used path to the famous mystical genius of the 14th century, popularly known as Lalla-Ded now a days. The Siddha Yogini, Lalleshwari, walked to the house near the forest, where Sodar-Mauji was trying to suckle the highbrowed baby but without success. At that moment, the mother was imploring the deity of the forest for the preservation and protection of her new-born prodigy. it was exactly 50 years after the appearance of Lalleshwari that she had to roam and wander on to the lowly abode and step in with a smile on her lips, to remind the Yoga-Bhrashta of the divine purpose of his coming, while she herself was alive and had a mission to fulfill. To the taunt:

"If you did not feel shy of being born, why feel shy of sucking": Nunda responded with a long suck from the mother's breast. A question arises as to why he should have taken birth in the same century. When Rama came Pershu Rama had to make an exit from the stage. But in Lalla's case it was not so. She had to inspire and train him in order that the mission of her life in the changed

Kashmir, politically, religiously, and socially, notwithstanding her personal sacrifices, was carried on after she had her Nirvana, so that in the time to come, nobody should raise his finger and point at the two brothers, living under the same roof, eating the same food, and using the same plates:one sticking to the faith of his forefathers and the other tempted by the greenage of "fresh woods and pasture snow". Lalla's mission was not to achieve "the ascent of self" but the preservation of a tradition, for which she had made preparations for about 40 years of her life. This she had to transmit to some worthy trustee and successor, and Nunda Rishi had to hurry up. It is amusing that both Lalla-Ded and Nunda Rishi lived a married life but the experiences differed and varied. Lalla preceded the dynastic governmental change and lived through it. Nunda Rishi proceded the violent character of that change. He strove hard not to allow the flock entrusted to his care to go astray. If Yasman Rishi converted him to new faith, that wrought no change in his cultural and social outlook but added one more to the movement of universal brotherhood. It may be emphasised that the spiritual contribution of Sheikh Noor-ud-Din Wali, as Nunda Rishi is known now, was so great that veneration is offered at his tomb at Chrar (Tsrar)by all irrespective of their religious convictions. Both Muslim and Non-Muslim devotees are seen, shoulder to shoulder, standing at the tomb, offering prayers and receiving "Neveeda" (tabaruk). And it is not surprising that the non-convert still ties a "Daish, piece of cloth" as he does at his Brahmanic shrine, to pray for a favour. Sheikh Noor-ud-Din Wali, the Saint Standard Bearer of Kashmir, shines brightly on the spritual and cultutal firmament of Kashmir. His Shruks or sayings have inspired many a saint, fakir and poet, who have followed his Order during the last six centuries.

Sheikh Noor-ud-Din Wali alias Nund Riyosh considered Lala-Ded alias Lalleshwari, as his spiritual guide. In one of his Shruks, he pays homage to her in the following words:

" Tas Padmanpur-i-che Lallay,
Tim gali gali amrit cheyo.
Shiv soran thalay thalay,
Tuth meh war dita diyo:

Karmyogi J.L.K.Jalali

MYSTICISM IN KASHMIR POETRY

From times immemorial Kashmiri genius has exhibited exemplary tolerance between different sects professing various religions. The oldest extant history of Kashmir, "The River of Kings"has profusely endorsed this attitude of Kashmiri mind. There is not a single instance of communal friction in it, more so, the Buddhist Kings have granted munificent endowments for the construction of "Shiva" or "Vaishnu" temples and vice versa. The great warrior king "Lalitaditya" himself subscribing to Vaishnava faith erected a "pillar of Shining Silver" in the name of Lord Buddha[1] Iconoclastic approach to life is foreign to Kashmiri ethos.

In this happy and tolerant climate the fertile mind of Kashmiri geared its intellect to unravel the unknown- beyond speech and mind. Mysticism is an exercise in the quest of the "spirit". It is the identification of the self with the super-self. Therefore it was no surprise that the three world-religions, Hinduism, Buddhism and Islam in addition to giving injunctions for temporal well-being of mankind, also dabbled in the philosophic quibbles and interrogative attitude towards life beyond. The Kashmiri monastic Shaivism, the "Vacuum Theory" of the Buddhists and the Sufism of the Muslims is a pointer in this direction. This experimentation with self-realisation owes its origin to the eatholicity of Kashmiri way of thinking.

Literature holds mirror to life and this homely truth was proved to hilt here in Kashmiri poetry awoke with mystic rambles for God-realisation. The pre-requisites for it being self education and self-discipline. A mystic inherently abjures the mundane and analyses the sublime. He would like to traverse the distance between the actual and the ideal with unbelievable speed and in minimum possible time. It is for this reason that "Lalla" (14th century A.D.) beckons us:

"I was essentially one but got multiplied into many; I was very close to Him, but got estranged from Him. I found him visible and also invisible every where. The thief of my thoughts has actually duped me."

In this way "Lalla Ded" the first and foremost mystic poet of

Kashmiri literature in a very direct and unartificial way, exhorts us to silence the forces of contradiction and self-alienation inherent in a man following the shadows of material attainments. She does not rest on her oars on these text books polemics but as a practical mystic lays bare the contradiction in the thinking of man[2]

"Though within I sought for Him without; by harnessing my vital sirs (Pranayama) I found the eternal repose. Through concentrated meditation I discovered that God alone pervades the whole world. Consequently I get identified with Him[3].

Herein, this Great Lady clearly marks the frontiers between the self and the super-self, Immanence and Transcendence. When the self and the super-self, Immanence and Transcendence. When self-consciousness promotes self-dependence, the self and the super self get submerged into each other. It cannot be denied that Lalla's quatrains are punctuated with Shivistic thought and in Shaivism. "Anu" the mortal can attain to (Shivahood) immortality, through the grace of self-realisation. In Vedanta also "Jivatma" can be transformed into "paramatma". Therefore, it can squarely be said that "Lalleded's" poetry is the Kashmiri version of Shaivism originally couched in Sanskrit. Regarding the concept of the "knower" and the "known" the celebrated Shaiva teacher Abbinavgupta has very convincingly deliberated in his mammoth work "Tantraloka" and how they get equated in the final analysis has been very eloquently discussed by him. Actually the whole gamut of Hindu philosophy believes in the ultimate identification of the soul with the super soul[4] "Mysticism is an intuitive approach to truth rather than rational and discursive[5]."

It consequently explains the use of language by the mystics replete with symbols, images and even conundrums, far above the comprehension of the ordinary man. As a corollary from it, mysticism is individualistic in approach and can never be collective. It is subjective and personal also.

However, its is also to be conceded that in mysticism revelation and intuition are complementary to each other, Revelation is a potent factor for igniting perception, knowledge (Jnena) but it cannot be assimilated without the active participation of desire (Ichha) and action (Kriya) which from Shaivistic point of view can roughly be treated as intuition; This has been aptly enunciated in Shivasutras "knowledge is bondage[6]". "Lalla" personifies all such traits in her Vaks so is very unintelligible at times. Her forte is

intuitive revelation. The most gleaming flicker of Hindu mysticism can be also perceived in the "Vaks" of Rupabhavani (17th century). She has made a happy blend of "knowledge" (Jnana) and Action (Kriya) in her mystic expressions which in essence are the two pillars on which the whole edifice of Monistic Shaivism stands. The third one Desire 'Ichha' she has tried to fuse with action.

Her "Vaks" couched in Kashmiri intermixed with Sanskrit phraseology and Hindi-Vocabulary are a bit difficult to comprehend. The intensity of feelings is nevertheless patent in these. In her poetry the unitive consciousness and absolutic consciousness rub shoulder with each other and at such a stage of God realization the experience matters and not the expression. Hence her "Vaks" have spurned the fetters of a single medium of expression. The finite medium of language cannot bind the experience of "Infinite". Her spiritual experience is graphically in this "Vak":-

"He who concentrates his mind on Him and also weighs his own self (The capacity to undertake such self-discipline) who is oblivious to all around him, is in the hectic search of the "supreme" Will. Yoke Him to his use, thus he will get dissolved in his own self (Divinity being within)[7]."

Among other Hindu mystics the names of Parmananda, Krishna Razdan, Lakshmanji Bulbul can also be enumerated; but it goes without saying that "Lalla" though being the first in the line has outshone them all. Perhaps the reason for it is the approach of these poets to the "Divine spirit". All these three poets were essentially the votaries of the Divine Spirit with attributes (Saguna) and mysticism is in essence a meditation of the attributeless-(Nirguna).

Though Parmananda has produced a fine allegory in his "Karma Bhoomika" yet his heat lay with the enrapturing "Lalla" of Sri Krishna or the sublimating wedlock of Lord Shiva and Parvati. In between his ecstatic songs he has very deftly interspersed the mystical content like thus:

"Gokul is my heart and you carry on milk-trade there,
God personification of Chitta (consciousness) Vimarsha
(Reflection) and Dipti (Effulgence)"[8].

In more recent times "Masterji"[9] made a laudable effort in synthesising the temporal and spiritual aspects of his poetry in his "Sumran"[10]. His erudite scholarship in Sanskrit and Persian with equal mastery over both has woven a superb texture of sound and sense pulsating with devotion. His approach technically speaking

was through head and not heart. In mysticism objectivity has no place, it is the experience which counts. It is strictly personal and cannot be borrowed. The "Sumran" at best is a speculative treatise with profound intellectual content in it.

As against it the "Govinda-Amrit" of Shri Gobind Kak of Vanpoh is a candid expression of his innermost feelings intense and spontaneous. He lived what he preached. He seems to have been very much influenced by "Kabir" the great mystic poet of Hindi Literature[11].

"Lo: Hark, the voice of silence is ringing. The pen is incapable of describing the form or name. The pen is beyond it: Only those know it who are conversant with this Jingling of the soul."[12]

Despite all this it can safely be asserted that much of Hindu mystic Lore has not been able to take to the medium of Kashmiri and this shortcoming has been more than offset by the voluminous literature of Muslim Sufi poets. Muslim mystics have taken kindly to this medium for reasons obvious and in consequence of this Kashmiri literature can rightfully take pride in their exuberant self-expression.

"Sufism" in its original essence is alien to Kashmir. It has migrated from Central Asia to this place. The links of trade and culture between Kashmir and Central Asia have existed even before the conversion to Islam of a sizable portion of Kashmiri population[13].However the Kashmiri version of Islamic Sufism has drawn copiously from :Shaivism"[14] and a most healthy philosophy of life has taken shape by this happy amalgam of Islamic and Hindu mysticism.

In Sufism two forms of mystic exhalation are noticed abnormal and supernormal. Ibn-Farid calls them intoxication and the sobriety of union respectively [15]. In the first stage the Sufis experience non-distinction between the creator and the creature, the gulf between the two having vanished completely.

On this spiritual elevation the creature or the realizer (Arif) is obvious of his own existence and gets dissolved in the ocean of spiritual transcendence (marfat); but in the second stage, the Realizer having recovered and found his poise after the first flash of encounter with the Divinity, is conscious of his own self and the relation he has thus developed with God-the super self. The momentary intoxication of the first flash (fanna) is spiritualised into perennial "sobriety of union". Thus the equation between the

two is complete. In Shaivism we call it "Abboda" positive union.

The Doyen of Kashmiri Saints or Rishis as they are affectionately called is Sheikh Noor-ud-Din Wali (Later 14th century A.D.). His "Vaks" or "Shruks" pulsate with the music of the spiritual experience. He is always at pains to exhort us to reach these virgin heights of self-consciousness through the vehicle of self-realization wherein the intellect and discrimination are of no avail:-

"Having pondered over his one-ness, I became ever-now and one (with Him). This oneness with Him has ignited whole of my soul. The intellect and intelligence have no use there, oh my dear one, who can sip in this ocean of spirituality[16].

The saint-poet believes in complete self-abrogation and absolute absorption in the contemplation of God:-

"If you try to realize Him, the realization will dawn automatically upon you, and whole of your conscious self will be coloured with the halo of one God. If you make some advance towards Him, He will be in your firm grasp and your heart and soul will resound with his name"[17].

The Muslim Sufis of Kashmir despite the influence of Shaivism and other Hindu thought have throughout remained faithful to their own convictions. "The elevated feeling of Divine pervasion with which the Prophet often spoke, the depth of fervent and ecstatic rapture which characterised his devotion, constitute the chief basis on which Muslim Sufism is founded[18]. So these stalwarts of spiritual eminence were actually inspired by the word of Koran. Therefore, Shams Fair (18th-1904) A.D. very rightly says:

"When the Realizer will hear by the eyes and see by his ears, then only he can see a glimpse of Mohammed's transcendence. On that place the speed and speech have no meaning. How can I express what was revealed to me"[19].

Shams Fair has also alluded to the "Cognition theory" (pratyabhijna) of the Shaivas like this: "The Cognition" dictation that the soul and perception are to be fully dissolved into each other. Then only self recognition will take place and the soul will get immersed in super-soul[20].

In mysticism self-search proceeds self examination, and when the soul is absolved of worldly impurities, the self-conscious stage is reached. The purpose of religion is actually banishment of ignorance (Avidya skt, Jahalat Persian) and its replacement by knowledge (Vidya-skt, Aql-Persian). Therefore, it follows from it

that mysticism lays emphasis as a rule on experience rather than on authority, so the mystics are shy of quoting authorities but very conscious about enumerating their experience.

Therefore, Waza Mahmood (1834-1924) addresses his beloved like this:

"O My beloved, why do you feel flattered, somebody has also seduced me. From where did I come, from whom I was born? On my route to self realization I had to get immersed in the springs of my consciousness, there I saw the "Supreme" waxing eloquent[21]".

Exact purview of Islamic Sufism can be gleaned from the writings of Al-Ghzali and Ibni -al-Arabi- the two profound thinkers in this field. Their thesis is that man is the microcasm in which all the divine attributes are united, and in Man also does God become fully conscious of Himself. "The world is merely the outward aspect of that which in its inward is God[22]. Hence the emphasis on Man- the vehicle to Divinity is pronounced in Sufism.

So Ahmed Rah is quite right when he says.

"The voice of silence in your mind, should never get diminished by day or night. The chords of love are to be tinkled, then alone you will hear this Voice Permanently[23].

The stage where the Man and God - Soul and super-soul-self-consciousness and super-consciousness are epitomized into indistinguishable whole has been very lucidly brought out by Samad Mir (death 1959 A.D.;

"The seekers after truth ransacked the mosques and the temples but ultimately they were enamoured of their own conscious self, so they transcended the time and space - the terrestrial confine, and the limitless ether[24]"

The price a realizer has to pay for attaining the such Divine state is detachment, not to get involved in worldly enticements. Therefore, Ahad Zargar (born 1916-17) enunciates this Code of discipline for such seekers:

"God can be seen (realized) when you yourself become fully detached. Self existence and self enjoyment have no utility at that stage; coming out of such shackles., you will surely come face to face with Him. Therefore, you become a seeker after truth and thus indulge in self-criticism[25]"

This bright galaxy of Sufi thinkers can claim the names of such luminaries as Wahab Paray. Shah Qalandar, Svachha Kral, and Naima Sahib also in their orbit. All of these in their own way have

contributed richly to the emergence of Sufi-cult in Kashmir. They have toiled hard to make a healthy compromise between the mind and the soul to make mankind happier and wiser in every sense of the term. They have proved that Truth cuts through the barriers of religion, caste or creed. It is indivisible. Nature is not opposed to spirit. it is attachment to nature that is inconsistent with spiritual dignity [26]. These Savants while enjoying the Nature-like the lotus in the water-unattached, have tried to rise above it, interpret it and all the same groom it with the spirit to which it essentially belongs.

References :

1. Raja Tarangini -IV-194-204; M.A. Stein.
2. Lalleshwari, S. N. Charagi-1940-13th Vak.
3. Ibid - 14th Vak.
4. Tat-tvan-Asi (Thou art that). this reaffrain of Upnishads.
5. M.N. Sircar, Hindu Mysticism-1934 Page 22.
6. "Jnanam Bandhah" I,2.
7. Shri Rupa Bhavani-Rahasyopdesha - Published by Alake shwari Trust 1951, Page 17.
8. Radha Svyamwara, "Jnana Prakash", Page 41.
9. Master Zinda Kaul was a savant by nature and a government official by profession.
10. This collection of poems bagged the Sahitya Akademi Award in Kashmir also.
11. Published by Prof. P.N. Pandit, Bombay-1970.
12. Ibid Page 53.
13. "Kasheer" Sufi-Mohi-ud-Din Vol.II.
14. Amin Kamil-In his introduction to "Sufi Shayir", 1965 Page.7.
15. Nicholson-Idea of personality in Sufism Page-19.
16. Noor Nama, Page-37, published by Cultural Academy Srinagar.
17. Ibid Page-45.
18. Syed Amir Ali, The Spirit of Islam 1922 P.455.
19. Sufi Shayir, 1965, Page-106.
20. Ibid Page 107.
21. Ibid Page 130.
22. Sir Thomas Arnold - The legacy of Islam 1947. Page-224.
23. Sufi Shayir Page-140.
24. Ibid Page-169.
25. Ibid Page-205.
26. Dr. Radha Krishnan - East and the West 1995 Page-26.

K.N. Dhar

RISHI ATTITUDE TOWARDS FOOD

The basis of all human activity is the existence of wants. Men have wants or needs. They have to satisfy them. These wants are connected with our natural instincts. We feel hungry and thirsty, therefore we require food. Likewise we require clothes and shelter. Since, man is a social animal, he would like to do what others do. In the matter of food, clothing and housing, man follows certain social customs. He is influenced by other peoples' opinions and ideas.

Ideas, like empires and races, have in the past established their natural frontiers. Time has come when a second look must be given to the bad customs and immoral rites sanctioned by 'religious' practices rather than the thought and spirit underlying these religions.

Although the essential principles of Islam seem to be in harmony with those of the catholic ideas of Christian mysticism, yet European continent, by and large, has deliberately rejected the Islamic ideas of peace and concord, rather repelled them by force. Neither have ancient Egypt, Babylon and Palestine been greatly influenced by such mysticism.

Among the neoplatonists of Alexandria and the Sufis of Arabia and Persia, many seem to have listened to the voice of Hindu mysticism but rather as individuals than as leaders of popular movements. The southeastern region of Asia-both mainland and archipelogo-owes its religion and civilization almost entirely to India. Much the same can be said of Tibet, whence the Mongols took as much Indian civilization as they could absorb. In Java (Indonesia) and other Malay countries, Indian culture was superseded by Islam, yet even in Java-Sumatra the alphabet and to a large extent the customs of the people are still Indian. In another large area comprising of China, Japan, Koria and Viet-Nam, it appears a layer super-imposed on Chinese culture.

Hinduism, no doubt, is vast and multitudinous, but as a form of life and thought it is definite and unmistakable. All Hindus lay stress on asceticism and self-mortification, as a means of purifying the soul and obtaining supernatural powers. Hindus, as a whole,

have a conviction that every man who is in earnest about religion must follow a discipline at least to the extent of observing chastity and eating only to support life, morever austerities are required to give clearer insight into divine mysteries and control over the forces of nature.

In detail, the Hindu doctrine may assume various forms but the essence of all is the same, namely that a life does not begin at birth or end at death but is a link in an infinite series of lives. Animal, human and divine existences may all be links in the chain. A man's deeds, if good, may exalt him to the heavens, if evil, may degrade him to life as a beast.

This perhaps is the reason that Indian religions, Hinduism, Buddhism, Jainism, all alike, give the highest prominence to the duty of kindness to animals. All Indian religions are penetrated with the idea that civilization means a gentle and enlightened temper. This idea has been primarily responsible for promotion of the concept of vegetarianism as against the deep-rooted human instinct of animal flesh-eating.

A free translation of some verses of poet Iqbal would be:

":pious people obtain their food from vegetation.Those who abstain from animal-flesh come closer to God. One who sharpens one's teeth (with animal foods) will lead one to disgrace. Those who take pride in the slaughter of sheep may well remember that self-denial alone can make them good and great."

(Refer Booklet entitled Herday Reshi published by Idara Sultania Introduction by Mirza Kamal-ud-Din Shaida).

Viewed against this back-ground, it may be safely claimed that the Rishi cult and vegetarianism is as old as religion and philosophy is in India. In Kashmir, Rishi order was in existence even during Brahamanic period prior to the advent of Islam. They included three brothers- Khalsman Reshi, Pulasman Reshi and Yasman Reshi.

Reshi, as defined in Asrar-ul-Abrar is "one who indulges in constant meditation, observes celibacy, austerity and vegetarianism". This definition could apply to both Hindu and Muslim saints and mystics.

Historians concede that for about three centuries from 900 A.D.to 1200 A.D. Shaivism (or Trikka philosophy) reigned supreme in Kashmir which advocated unity of creation. This was in close conformity with the Islamic,especially Sufi, concept of Tawheed-Illahi.

The definition of Reshi is fortunately the same as that of a Sufi. Literally it means a person with woolen clothes but in essence it refers to group of persons who are nearer and close to God; are pious and tolerant ; are truthful and above all bestow their love to all kinds of life. This is the definition given by Sheikh Shuhab-ud-Din Shurwardy as quoted by Baba Dawood Khaki.

Sufism was known to the Muslim world since the days of Khawja Uwais Qarni of Yemen who though not having any physical contact with the Prophet(s.a.w.s.), was his contemporary. The Sufi order had existed in Iran, Iraq and Bokhara much before it came to Kashmir. According to reliable evidence the first Sufi to settle in India was Sheikh Ismail who landed at Lahore. There is also evidence that the Sufis who had earlier settled in the Sindh had drawn both the Hindu and Muslim devotees, much before it had happened in Kashmir. The period between 14th and 16th centuries signifies the surfeit of Sufism in the whole country. To mention only a few outstanding Sufis of the times, we have Khawaja Moin-u-din Chisti of Ajmer, Khawaja Ali Qalandr of Panipat, Khawaja Fariduddin of Pak-Patan, Imam Shah of Sind, and Damal Shah of Gujrat, Mohammad Sadiq of Nasik, Sheikh Salim Chisti of Fatehpur Sikri, Khwaja Nizmuddin of Delhi. What Sheikh Noor-ud-Din Noorani Wali of Kashmir had promoted in the valley was already known to the rest of the country. Alamdar-i-Kashmir's order was on the lines of vegetarianism, austernity and piety.

Lala Arifa and Nund Reshi were no different from Ramananda, Chaitanya and Eknath

The motto with saints and sages was alike with Khawaja Ajmeri and all others.

We may compare this motto with the conduct of early Muslims during the Holy Prophet's time, about whom a Roman Officer remarked these observations:

"At night you will find them prayful;
during the day you will find them fasting. They keep their promises, order good deeds, suppress evil and maintain complete equality among themselves."

"Prophet Muhammad and His Mission" by Athar Hussain-1967 P.173

The Prophet of Islam (peace be upon him) taught his people to adopt purity of life and straightforwardness of conduct. He stimulated moral qualities of prudence and restraint and breathed

into Muslims catholic charity and fear of God. The result was that indulgence and dissipation gave way to righteousness and austerity; arrogance, greed and lust for power gave way to humility and self-denial. Injustice, cruelty and oppression was replaced by equality, justice and kindness.

The Prophet(peace be upon him) is reported to have said:

"My people comprise of three categories.

One type resembles Prophets and are reckoned by their good deeds.

The other type resembles Malaks (angels) who continuously recite praise of Allah.

The third category consists of those who indulge in excessive eating, drinking and sex. They resemble animals".

(Mus-sanad Bazaz-Refer Sharah Award-Fatihayab by late Moulvi Abdul Kabir-1964).

The Prophet(peace be upon him) not only preached to the people to show kindness to each other but also to all living souls. If he saw any animal over-loaded or ill-fed, he would pull up the owner and say "Fear God in your treatment of animals".

A companion came to him with the young ones of a bird in his sheet. He was directed by the Prophet(peace be upon him) to replace the offspring of the mother-bird in the same bush.

During a journey, somebody picked up some birds' eggs. The Prophet(peace be upon him) asked the man to replace the eggs to the bird's nest. While marching triumphantly into Mecca, the Prophet's army found a dog's puppies lying near the road, the Prophet posted a person to see that they were not disturbed.

The Prophet said:

"Verily there is heavenly reward for every act of kindness done to a living animal".

Among other quotable quotes,the Holy Prophet(s.a.w.s.) is credited with the following wise saying needs a mention:

"One who recites Malik-ul-Mulk in abundant numbers, surely God shall grace him with abundance and one who recites Al-Ghani for 10,000 times on each Friday for ten Fridays and during this period will abstain from meat-eating, God Almighty shall provide to him Rizq in abundance".

Infatul-Awaam by Syed Abdul Qasim Lucknow (Shia booklet).

One of the most valuable sayings of Hazrat Ali (Karamullah Wajuhu) is:

"Don't make your stomach a tomb of slaughtered animals".
(-A Ruler in Tatters-1961.) Imamia Mission Lucknow series 361.

The Kashmir Example

The examples of religious divines in Kashmir are to serve as guiding light-houses for pious Muslims. Kashmir, in fact, is the unique place where true spirit of Islam has been understood by the righteous who included Rishis of local descent and Syeds who had immigrated from Arab and Persian lands, some seven hundred years ago. These Syeds took pride in joining the mystic order of Kashmiri Rishis. They are remembered as Baba in preference to Syed.

A few anecdotes, are mentioned in Tarikh-i-Hassan, a book on History of Kashmir in Persian in 4 volumes by Molvi Hassan of Kuihama (Bandipora) especially volume III which contains brief biographies of saints, seers, Sheikhs, Wallies and Majazib of Kashmir, written about 100 years ago.

Mir Syed Ali Hahadani (Hazrat Amir-i-Kabir)*.

For a long period of hundred and seventy days, during conquests of 'Sair-e-Saluk'; Hazrat Amir did not eat anything. Likewise, in a journey undertaken for Haj, he observed fast for 27 days. He had only one shirt to wear for nearly seven years for which period he ate only bread of barley. He would earn his living by producing handicraft of sewing caps.

About his own austerity, he is reported to have remarked:
"for about fifty years I, of my own accord, simply laid down on plain ground during the night and did not sleep. Neither did I partook of anything which may be described as luxurious or tasty food;

Hazrat Sheikh Noor Din Walli Reshi

Hazrat Sheikh lived in a cave at Kaimoh (in Kulgam, Kashmir) and did not eat anything else than the wild green leaves of the hills.

---

*F.N- Mir Syed Ali Hamdani,reportedly under devine instructions, deputed his two cousins Syed Hussain Simnani and Syed Taj Din Humadani to Kashmir and later personally visited the valley thrice. During his third and the last visit, he stayed in Kashmir for about 22 years. this was the time when foundations of a Muslim Sultanate had been laid in Kashmir, but the 'Muslim' rulers of Kashmir were far away from the real teachings and spirit of Islam. His visit brought about the occurrence of a spiritual revolution in Kashmir. Poet Iqbal says that this Syed of Syeds and Salar of Ajam was responsible for the change of fate of inhabitants of "Little Iran". i.e. Kashmir.(Contd.)

One day two women, sitting near the cave, were talking to each other. One of them said to the other:- "Nund Reshi eats only wild leaves and yet his body looks alright." The other woman remarked: "Don't you see; animals eat green leaves and they are well-built".Sheikh Noor Din got a que from this conversation and left the cave to wander from village to village. During these wanderings, he did not take any food-stuff excepting cow's milk.

Hazrat Sheikh Hamza Mukhdoomi

He is reported to have received religious initiation from Hazrat Syed Jalal-ud-Din Bukhari. By gradual means he acquired the position of Muqqim, Musafir, one who has conquered time and space. He was also able to conquer the seven conditions of Jinn, Nafas, Qalb, Rooh, Sirr, Khufi and Gaib. This he was able to do by exercising control over material wants. He has laid down ten pre-conditions for attaining piety. These are:

1. Tooba • Repentence.
2. Zuhd -Abstinence.
3. Tawakal-Full faith in Providence.
4. Uzlat-Isolation.
5 Khushkhalki- Good behaviour and conduct.
6. Qana'th-Austerity and simplicity.
7. Tawajuh- Concentration.
8. Sabar- Endurance.
9. Maraqba-Meditation.
10. Raza-Resignation to God's Will.

As per the chronicles of historians, Kashmiris are shown to have, till then, indulged in all acts of Kufr, Shirk and Ilhad, all manifestations of rebellion of man towards God Almighty.

Now what were these rebellious and indulgent activities?

The leader of Pujaris (ritualistic priests) was Shapur, who lived in the Temple of Kalishori on the banks of river Jhelum.There, at present, is located the Khankah-i-Moula, the great Hall in Srinagar devoted to spiritual meditations and prayers. He and his associates would extract daily by forcible means, from non-Muslims as well as Muslims, a huge basket of breads, meat of a bulky sheep and a big container of wine. Those who would not comply would be punished by the evil spirits and ghosts under the control of this Guru high priest and his associates, well-versed in Tantric Black Magic.

The Amir Kabir (Mir Syed Ali Hamadani) on the other hand established the true spirit of religion in Kashmir and established a hospice endowed with a langer which provided free but simple food to Dervesh and other types of pious people.

(Refer booklet on Khanqah-i-Maulla by Sad-ud-Din Tarabali, Waqf namas, and Annual Report for 1951-52 by Ghulam Ahmad Hamdani Zohra).

In his youth, he became accustomed to cold-water baths prior to long meditations during the nights and abstinence from niceties of life.

The name given to this bright star in the galaxy of religious divines of Kashmir was Hamza, the same as was of the uncle of the Holy Prophet Muhammad and Hazrat Ali Murtaẓa, who has been given the title of Ghazi-u-Din and Syed-u-Shuada. The mystics claim that Hazrat Hamza Makhdum was the spiritual offspring of the Holy Prophet. Like the great Prophets of Bani Israel, Hazrat Hamza (born 900 Hijri) at Tujjar in northern Kashmir in Zaingir near Sopore, reared cattle when he was a boy. he was destined to give a lead to Kashmiris in righteousness and piety. Like Jesus Christ, he remained a bachelor, as Friends of God remain unattached to worldly connections and are concerned wholly and solely with their zest and zeal to attain nearness to the True Lord.

It would be a traversity of facts and an untruth to suggest that this greatest spiritual saint of Kaṣhmir was given to routine of meat-eating. The truth is that he disliked it.

<u>Hazrat Sheikh Dawood alias Batamaloo Sahib</u>

He would keep night-long vigil and would observe fasts almost permanently. His occupation was agriculture. He would always arrange to get a big container of rice and milk brought to the fields every day. Everyone who would pass that way would partake food from this container, but the container would not get emptied till evening. "This led him to be known as "Bata Maloo" (the Rice Lord).

<u>Harday Reshi</u>

His name was Baba Haider. Born as a son of Sheikh Abdullah in village Kawan Ancha (now called Islamabad or Anantnag, the second town in Kashmir, next to Srinagar in population) on 29 Rajab 909 Hijri and passed away on first of Ziqadah 986 Hijri. His shrine at Islamabad (Anantnag) attracts thousands of people devoted to Rishi order of religious mystics in Kashmir.

During his annual Urs even non-vegetarian non-Muslims in Kashmir observe abstinence from meat-eating for self-purification and in respect and regard to the teachings of this high Reshi Priest.

Maulana Sheikh Baba Dawood Mushkawati has written in his Persian book Asrar-ul-Abrar:

"A Reshi is one who is always engaged in piety and prayers, he prefers to remain celibate, he has no desire for property or offspring; he is unconcerned for means of livelihood; stays aloof in caves etc; he eats and sleeps less; he abandons tasty foods and luxurious things; he wears simple clothing; is content with vegetables; he does not offend anybody; he is sympathetic towards all creatures; and is endowed with similar other good and godly qualities".

(See publication entitled "Hazrat Mahboob-ul-Alam" in Urdu published by Idara Sultania, Srinagar. Also see Urdu Weekly Naya Walwalla,, Srinagar (April,15,1977) Article by Pirzada Mohammad Shaffi).

Baba Dawood says that Harday Reshi attained the highest cadre in the Reshi order. He was able to get to the position of Tarik-i-Lazat, especially he abandoned eating of meat. All through his life, he lived a very simple and unostentatious life.

In a poem, Mulla Baha-uddin Mattoo has described the visit of Hazrat Sheikh Ḥamza Mukhdoomi, Sultannul Aarifeen, to Maraj (South Kashmir) and his meeting with Sheikh Baba Harday Reshi. The anecdote recalls how, after the Reshi established his close kinship with the Holy Prophet Muhammad (s.a.w.s.), the Sheikh Hamza Mukhdoom bestowed upon the Reshi his Qullah (Cap) and Khirqah (gown) and permission to enter into the Shurwardia order.

Hazrat Reshi was of simple manners, and more simple dress. He would often walk barefooted. He would attend to agricultural occupations. Sheikh Dawood Khaki refutes the allegations that the Reshi had in any way violated Sharia laws, or had committed acts not permitted by Shariat, or that he had advocated denial of sacrifice or opposed offering of Friday Prayers in congregation. On the contrary, the Sheikh every day read Awradh-i-Fatahia (Book of poetical prose containing praises of Allah written by Hazrat Amir Kabir Mir Syed Ali Hamdani) which is the greatest proof of the Reshi's unabiding faith in Truth. He , almost without fail, offered Prayers five times a day with Jama'at (in congregation) except when forced by compelling circumstances. Sheikh Baba Dawood Khaki has written a Persian poem in praise of Hazrat Reshi, called Qaseeda Lamia. In this poem some remarkable points of mystical significance attributed to Harday Reshi have been made. Some of these points are given below.

This Qaseeda in Persian has been printed, along with its Kashmiri version by Qamgar Khistwari, by the Intizamia committee of the

shrine of Hazrat Sheikh Hamza Makhdoom, Srinagar. The author has written books in Persian verse, (i) Qaseeda Vird-ul-Mureedin, (11) Dastur-ul-Salkin (111) Qaseeda Jalalia and iv. Risla Jalalia in commemoration of the Mehboob-ul-Aalam, Sultan-ul-Aareefin Hazrat Sheikh Hamza Makhdoom (b.900 Hijri.), who was common spiritual guide of Harday Reshi and Baba Dawood Khaki:-

1. Like other Rishies, he earned his livelihood from agriculture. He was particular about food acquired by Halal means.
2. His shrine in Islamabad (Anantnag) has been endowed with orchards for its maintenance.
3. He abstained from ostentatious clothing and his clothes mainly comprised of tweeds and woolens.
4. He would not wear socks, Nor did he use footwear habitually. He would generally go about bare-foot. However, he would use Naal (Chappal) made of grass. Wearing Naal is the tradition left by Mustaffa (Prophet Muhammad) and Murtaza (Hazrat Ali) Allah's blessings be in them all..
5. He got accustomed to piety from his youth-days. He killed his personal likings and dictates of his self in the great Jahad (Crusade) against selfish demands.
6. In the Rishi-cult, piety means abstinence from not only things declared as Haram but also to be given to abstinence from things which may fall under the category of taste and animal urges. The Rishis have to be in constant meditation and Zuhd.
7. It is advisable to keep fasts regularly and to refrain from eating of animal-flesh, one who keeps constant fast is assured of safety from the fires of Hell. This is Prophet's saying as related by Khwaja Khalaq and Bilal.
8. For those who remain unmarried and celebate, Roza or Suom(fasting) is advised, though the Prophet has given permission for married life. Jesus, his mother Mariam(A.S.), Prophet Yahya(A.S.) were also single and unmarried. Qwais and Rabia too were among this tribe. In remaining single, Saliks can endure and be patient as also free from concerns about the family. They, as such, get whole-hearted devotion towards the Creator.

9. To refrain from animal urges and to abstain from meat, onions and garlic is the pre-condition for the journey towards Piety and God-realisation.
10. Distribution of meat can never be an alternative to sacrifice and purification of self. There is, besides, the danger of being guilty of Israf (Crossing the bounds). (Everyone has experienced the smell of onion and garlic eaters and it is also probable that meat-eaters have stronger smell than vegetarians, although many spices produce their own odours.
-'Smell and communication': The sense of smell and its abnormalities. Ellis Donak (Churchill Living-stone: 1974-page 187)*.
11. No doubt, meat is the queen of cuisine and culinary dishes in terms of taste, but it is better to refrain from it lest one is taken to task (Meat is in the category of MUBAH not HARAM).
12. It is the characteristics of meat to make one's heart stony; it is therefore good for men of heart to avoid it for the sake of their hearts and for fear of being taken to task.
13. The Prophet himself was the greatest Man of Piety who has said that he would refrain from meat-eating for periods extending up to twenty years.
14. Hazrat Ali Murtaza(k.a.t.w.), too, did not eat meat due to his Zahidi character, save occasionally a small piece of liver too close to gall-bladder from the sacrificial animal he would offer himself (Note: Gall-bladder is known to be bitter in taste for its constant function of bile-secretion).
15 Hazrat Abubakr and Hazrat Umar (the two companions of Prophet Mohammad (s.a.w.s.) who succeeded him as his Caliphs) did not offer sacrifices in the shape of animals, so that persons without means don't find any wrong or objection in upholding this tradition.

---

*F.N. Page -216 The use of ordours as offerings probably originated in animal sacrifices where the smell of burning flesh was quite naturally held to be 'Satisfying to the gods'. Gradually scented woods were added to sacrificial fires so that in later times the smell of burning flesh from the sacrificed oxen came to be thoroughly obnoxious to the gods and had to be disguised by incense.

16 Hazrat Usman(May Allah be pleased with him), the third and one among the four Caliphs, in his attempt to be nearer God, gave away in alms live horses and camels, treating them as having been sacrificed.

17. For a poor traveller it is not obligatory to slaughter animals. This is recorded in the Fiqah, law laid down by the great men of knowledge.

18. At the time of Qurban, one aught to die. In lieu, one can give away live animals or its equivalent price in money or kind.

19. When one would sacrifice one's Nafs (self) in the way of God, one would find this is the pathway to get emancipation in life.

20. If you want to keep the acts of your alms- giving perpetually living, give away live animals like cows, ponies etc. to poor people.

21. Protection and prevention of cruelty to animals should make man to prevent even from killing insignificant ants, while walking, as much as possible.

22. Killing of any living being, except those who are harmful, has been forbidden by the Holy Prophet who has laid down cleansing of tooth (Miswak) and tooth-pick (Khalal) as Sona'at, obligatory (Note-Five nuisances whose destruction is permitted are: a Jungle-crow, a kite, a rat, a scorpion and a biting dog).

23. The holy Prophet(s.a.w.s.) has laid down things for us to adopt and things for us to abstain. So , if we want to be his followers, we must follow his teachings.

24. The Prophet(s.a.w.s.), as the greatest of the human beings, abstained from temptative foods; he continued to offer Tawba till the time of his passing-away (alboit his noble and holy person being Masoom, Rahmat-ul-Aalameen, and Shafiaul Yom-i-Jaza).

25. Keep one foot down on your desires and keep your other foot moving treading in the path of your Friend. This is the advice given in private by those who have had the blessings of God's grace.

26. This, too, is the lesson given by Maulana Roumi in his Book of verse.

27. It is not prudent for Mard-i-Kamil (Man of eminence) to

eat mouthfuls of tasty foods. Let you be just, not stocking your belly with such mouthfuls.

28. The Sheikhs (Men of piety) have different methods of food eating, but they are all particular to see that their food does not exceed few mouthfuls.

29. The Reshi was, on account of his unmarried and secluded life, an abstainer of meat, honey, garlic and onions.

(Refer: Qasida Virdul Murideen).

These exhortations are completely in consonance with the teachings of Holy Quran, but this is a subject fit for a separate detailed study

MOHAMMAD AMIN PANDIT

F.N. Articles by the same author entitled "Islam promotes vegetarianism" have been published in Urdu journals HANAFI and AL-ITIQAD edited by Maulana Syed Mohammad Qasim Shah Bukhari, chief of Jammu & Kashmir Anjuman: Tabligul Islam and Hanafia Arabic College, Srinagar.

SHEIKH-UL ALAM
A RESHI RATHER THAN A POET

A great controversy rages among the people today about Sheikh-ul-Alam. Was he a poet or Reshi? A deeper study of his life and teachings will reveal that he was a Reshi rather than a Poet is too small a title to be awarded to Sheikh-ul-Alam. The very word Sheikh-ul-Alam indicates that he was a Sheikh and Sheikh of the Sheikhs with a message for the world. Since he had a message to give to the world he produced spontaneous poetry. His poetry was a type of AAmad, which comes of itself and not AAvard produced as by effort by ordinary professional poets.

He is known as Sheikh-ul-Alam though it was not his real name. He was a real Sheikh equivalent to a Sufi or a Reshi. In fact he is still known in every Kasmiri family as Nund Reshi though he is remembered in veneration as Noor-ud-din-Wali as well. His real name was Nund Sangh, Sangh being his surname. The family appears to have originally belonged to Kishtawar. He was born in Kulgam Tehsil somewhere near Kaimoh where a shrine stands in commeneration of the Nund Reshi's family but more than the shrine, of historical significance is the holy cave of Guphabal about half a kilometer away from the shrine where Sheikh-ul-alam is reported to have lived in seclusion and in meditation for twelve years.This was his first experience in mysticism.He later traveled from Bamzu to Draigam Krimshore and ultimately to Chrarisharif to rest eternally.

All these travels are reminiscent of his experiments with mystic experiences and acts of Karma and Dharma, preaching for human brotherhood, love and compassion for all creatures and abstinence from all tasteful food intakes such as meat and other palatable eatables.

His life is full of events of one who is deeply emersed in mysticism. In this superhuman experience and supersensory perceptions, Sheikh-ul-Alam's tongue, like that of mystic poetess, Lalded spoke out certain wise verses which constitute his poetry. He was not a poet in the common sense of the term. A poet does

not go and live in caves. He is bound by the rules and guidelines that govern rhyme, rhythm and composition.These guidelines are man made whereas the poetry or (shrooks) are to be classified in the class of poetry which Iqbal has termed as

"Poetry is a part of prophethood"

Wallis, Rishis, Sheikhs and Sufis derive inspiration from their religious mainspring, the Holy Prophet himself (PBUH).This is not the case with ordinary populist poets, Sheikh-ul-Alam was one of such Rishis who had the direct blessings from the Holy Prophet and the Creator of all creations. Nund Reshi had not undergone any formal education. He was as such " illiterate" as we understand it in our common day life today but inspite of his being-non-conversant with the books and literature, he is the highest luminary of the indigenous spiritual world of Kashmir. Hence he occupies the highest rank of Sheikh-ul-Alam, almost in equal degree to the position held by Mehboob-ul-Alam, another luminary whom Kashmir has produced and who represents the Rishi-Sheikh-cult in Kashmir. This is a happy combination of the twin philosophies of universality of the creation and the creator as propounded by Shaivism and Islam.

For a poet, poetry is the end in itself. For a mystic poetry is only a medium. A poet has to exercise effort, energy and utilize his faculties to produce his poetry. The mystic poetry on the other hand is without effort. It springs from his bosom like the gushing waters of a fountain. A poet's work is often of topical interest, transitory and directed to people of a particular area or period. As against this the poetry produced by Nund-Reshi is eternal, of permanent value and with universal significance.

Nund Reshi's poetry and the message contained therein have not been broadcast to the Humanity at large, strewn all over the world, but a time will come when this beacon light will enlighten the hearts of Humanity at large and direct it towards the saintly life.

Idrisa Pandit

SHEIKH-UL-ALAM; POET AND SAINT

Kashmir art, culture and social life witnessed a great change during the 14th century A.D.when Muslim rule firmly established its roots in the valley and Zain-ul-abidin, emerged as the harbinger of new thoughts and ideas, and sufism stuck its roots in our land.

The cult of sufism attracted poets, thinkers and philosophers. And mysticism emerged as the marked feature of socio-religious life of medieval Kashmir. This resulted in the synthesis between the new and old traditions which the people of this land have inherited from ages together.

It was during this particular phase of Kashmir's cultural and spiritual transition that the famous saint and poet Sheikh Noor-ud-Din Wali, (Nunda Reshi), as he later was known among Hindus and Muslims, was born.

The great grand fathers of Sheikh Noor-ud-Din were rulers of Kishtwar and belonged to the Surajvansi dynasty. One of the great grand fathers named Ogra Sanz clandestinely tried to overthrow his cousin but failed to overthrow him and was compelled to flee from Kishtwar in despair. He took refuge in Kashmir and the Raja of Kashmir awarded Rupa Bhawani village as a jagir to him. His gradson, Salar Sanz, the father of Nunda Reshi turned pauper as his father died young. This drove young Salar in a state of utter confusion and in this wilderness he came in contact with the famous saint Yasman Rishi, who converted him to his own sect. Sheikh Salar then married Sadur Mauj, who was highly talented and beautiful.

Sheikh Noor-ud-din had no formal education. He spent most of his time in solitude. He had hardly any interest in worldly affairs and was mostly absorbed in deep thought and meditation.

The Sheikh was married to Zia Ded in his early age and had two children, Haider and Zoon. But he soon became sullen with worldly life. He had come to believe in a life of self-denial in order to attain divine pleasure. He took to the life of recluse. Nunda Reshi touched peak of meditation when he lived a life of wanderer in mountain caves and jungles near the village Darygam, where the truth dawned on him.

With the message of monotheism, Nunda Reshi went from village to village. People from all sects were attracted towards him by his preaching. During this period, he met many saints, Rishis and sanyasis. He also met Mir Syed Mohammad Hamdani (son of the great saint Amir Kabir)in 814 Hijra at Tsar Sharif. It is said that Sheikh Noor-ud-Din Rishi was already inspired by his spiritual powers before this historical meet.

Nunda Reshi died at Rupa Wan, in 1438 A.D 842 Hijra. His body was taken to Tsar Sharif for final rest with all royal honours. Zin-ul-abidin, the benevolent king of Kashmir, himself joined the funeral prayers.

In Kashmiri poetry, Sheikh Noor-ud-Din holds a very important position. He was younger contemporary of Lal Ded. His early poetry was strongly influenced by her. In his verses there is a deep sense of mystic thought and philosophy. Love and intense devotion to God forms the basis of his poetry. This type of poetry found ready response in Kashmir at that time because of strong influence of Shiva Philosophy, which was prevalent at that time. He always preferred world of mystism than the world of imagination. He says.

Love is death of only son to a mother
Can the lover have any sleep
love is venomous sting of a swarm of wasps
Can the lover have any rest?

The Sheikh's poetry is full of symbols and metaphors and he can be called a symbolist in technical sense of the word.

Would you know that oneness is
But you will cease to be
For oneness is all. It is a splendor vast
Has set all his on flame.

Nunda Reshi used symbols and metaphors which evoked ideas mingled with spiritual ambitions. Through these intellectual symbols, his poetry achieved greatness of indefinable wisdom.

Sheikh Noor-ud-Din as a poet was fully aware of various stages of the path on which a sufi has to travel in order to achieve his final goal of oneness with God. There are frequent references of the subject in his poetry. The sheikh says:

You have to face hailstorm and thunders
Thorny road and darkness are usual course
And then you attain the divine power"

His "Shruks" are mostly dedicatic in nature and exhortive in tone.

Most of which speaks of the transitory nature of life and its pleasures. Sheikh symbolises life like lavender. "Fugitive is life and fugitive is dust. Of these two ephemerals which is less. Not dust, but life".

There are very few instances of scholars and poets in our history who have acquired fame and popularity like Sheikh Noor-ud-Din. Dr. Sofi writing on the popularity of Nunda Reshi, says:

"The simplicity and purity of Sheikh Noor-ud-Din's life have deeply impressed the Kashmiris who entertain the highest veneration for the saint.'

Sheikh Noor-ud-Din is perhaps the only saint in the world history in whose name an Afghan Governor, Ali Mardhan Khan minted the currency in 1808A.D.

Sheikh Manzoor Ahmad.

SOCIAL, RELIGIOUS AND POLITICAL CONDITIONS DURING SHEIKH-UL-ALAM'S TIME

There is a difference of opinion as to when Sheikh-ul-Alam was born and when he passed away. However, commonly accepted opinion is that he was born in 779 H corresponding to 1377A.D.and passed away in 842H corresponding to 1440A.D.The period of sixty three years of his life was of great change in so far as political, economic, social and religious conditions of Kashmir are concerned. This period witnessed the reign of Sultan Qutab-u-din, Sultan Sikender, Sultan Ali Shah, only twenty years of Sultan Zain-ul-Abidin.

In order to understand the political and economic conditions which prevailed during Sheikh-ul-Alam's time , one has to make a study of those which were prior to him. And for this purpose, one has to turn the pages of history and start afresh from 1301-1320A.D.and onwards. This was the period when King Suhadeva ruled over Kashmir. He was extremely[1]. generous and allowed many learned people to come and settle here in Kashmir. Shahmir whose ancestry is shrouded in mystery, too came during his time and joined his army. He became, in the course of time, a personal friend of the king and as such, carried much influence in the administration. Syed Sharif-ud-Din alias Bulbul Shah along with many disciples also came to this place. Rinchan, whose[2] father was murdered by his kinsmen, fled from Ladakh and sought refuge in the village of Nilha in Lar under the patronage of Ramachandra.

Due to the invasion of the Tatars in 1320, the kingdom of Kashmir got disintegrated. Dulcha[3] or Zalju[4] entered the valley through Baramulla alongwith thousands of soldiers. King Suhadeva instead of facing the enemy, fled to Kishtawar leaving his house-hold, including his queen Kota Rani at the mercy of the invaders. Shahmir only stood at his post and tried his best to save the kingdom, Dulcha[5] ransacked the valley for nearly 9 months and finally left and perished in a snow storm near the Banihal pass[6], alongwith 50,000[7] captives from Kashmir. Rinchana took advantage of anarchy that

prevailed in the valley, finally assumed the Government and proclaimed himself as the king of Kashmir. He married the queen, kota Rani got himself converted to Islam and assumed the name of Sadr-ud-Din and thus became the first Muslim king of Kashmir[8] this marked the end of Hindu rule in Kashmir.

The flood of 1360 A.D. caused much misery and loss of property and he was forced to laid the foundation of a new town near Koho-maran, which was not to be effected by floods and name it as lakshmir Nagar after his queen Lakshmi.[9]

Shahb-u-Din was succeeded by his younger brother Hindal who adopted the title of sultan Qutb-ud-Din (1373-89). He was a poet and a man of culture besides being an able administrator. Among the problems which the sultan had to face was that during his reign rebellion broke out in Lohara, but he was able to subdue[10]. He was, however, able to suppress a conspiracy headed by his chief Minister Udayasri in alliance with Prince Hassan, the son of late sultan Shahab-ud-din. Udayasri was beheaded and the prince was thrown into prison.[11]

His reign marked the birth of Sheikh-Noor-ud-Din in 1377 and when Sultan died, Sheikh-ul-Alam was only twelve years old, that means Sheikh-Ul-Alam's childhood was spent during the reign of Sultan Qutb-ud-din. Till that time, Islam had made a considerable progress in the valley. Islam did not made its way by forcible conquests but by gradual conversion, for which the influence of foreign adventures, especially from central Asia had prepared the ground[12]. But however, some of the customs among people had great similarity. Both Hindus and Muslims use to wear same clothing as the common people used.

Qutub-ud-din's son Sikandar succeeded his father, when he was still a minor, As such, his mother acted as a regent. With the accession of sultan Sikandar, a second phase or more precise to say, Sheikh-ul-Alam entered into the life of youthfulness. When Sikandar came of the age, his mother transferred to him all powers. But however, soon after the sultan took up the reigns of government in his hands, he was faced with rèbellion of his Prime Minister Udda. The Sultan chased and took him a prisoner. Udda is said to have committed suicide. Sikandar also crushed the Palas, a tribe who had supported the rebellion

It may be mentioned here that the Syeds of Central Asia came towards the Northern India to save themselves from the wrath of

Timur. Way should they leave their hearth and home and wander about in the hills of the Noth India? As they were learned and well-versed in Arabic and Persian, they dominated the intellectual field, wherever they went, and started missionary activities. Syed Mir Ali Hamdani and Syed Mir Mohammad Hamdani propagated Islam in Kashmir with the support of the Sultans of Kashmir, like Sultan Sikandar.

Sikandar was brave and planned expeditious to foreign lands. He abolished many taxes like baj and tamgh Hospitals were founded by him where food and medicine were supplied free of cost. He was a great patron of learning and patronized scholars. He held the Sufis in great respect and scholars from far-of places came to Kashmir. Hazrat Mohammad Hamdani, the illustrious son of Hazrat Sayed Ali Hamdain exercised considerable influence on the people of Kashmir, especially so far as its social aspect is concerned. Sultan Sikandar was the first Muslim ruler, who enforced Shariat with great strictness. He banned the use of intoxicants, prohibited gambling, the dancing by women and the playing of musical instruments except of drum or pipe for military purposes. And to see that the Shariat was followed by his subjects hc established the office of Sheikh-ul-Islam. Suha Bhatta[15], a Brahamana became his commander in chief after embracing Islam. This man, now Saif-ud-din aroused iconoclastic zeal in the mind of Sikandar, who according to Jonaraja, ' broke the images of Martanda, Vijayshera, Chakrabhat, Tripureshera, Sureshvara and others[16]". He is represented differently by the early Muslim and non-Muslim historians. While the orthodox Muslim historians make him a hero of Islam and give credit to him for the destruction of temples for a religious cause, the Hindu writers have painted him in black. The wholesale destruction of temples by him or by his associates seems to be incorrect, as we have evidence to suggest that most of the temples might have been destroyed by various earthquakes[17] It must be remembered that Alamdar-i- Kashmir, Nunda Rishi lived during that period of Kashmir, when the majority of the people, who were the Pandits suffered at the hands of Suh-Bhatta, who became a Muslim and obtained the post of Chief Minister under Sultan Sikandar, It was a period when the Sultan started proslysation work under the influence of the Muslim Missionaries, Alamdar-i-Kashmir, being a saint who believed in human love and brotherhood, would not like persecutions. As such, he aimed at

spreading the message of love of God and love of humanity among the Kashmiris, irrespective of caste, creed and sex. His disciples include men from all creeds and even ladies also.

Sikandar was succeeded by his son, Ali Shah (1413-20)who was a weak ruler and whose reign represented conflicts between his ministers and nobles.

During his reign, sheikh-ul-Alam started his mission of traveling to different part of Kashmir. It is probable that while travailing, Syed Mohammad Hamadani might have met him and got more inspiration from him to for nearly 28 years Sheikh-ul-Alam remained in travel.

It cannot be denied that Alamdar-i-Kashmir, Nunda Rishi, belonged to the Rishi order, which has a long tradition in Kashmir. He was a saint, who had spent his youth in observing strict penances and who had lived on vegetables and herbs like a Yogi, through, his youth. On the other hand, Syed Mohammad Hamdani, like his father was a scholar of repute and a missionary of Islam. He being a pious man, had established his Sufi order, known as the Kuburavi Hussaini Silsila. It is also a historical fact that most of the Syeds who came to Kashmir, had fled away from their homes to save their lives. Some of them approached Alamdar-i-Kashmir, to save them from mental worries and bestow on them the benefits of spiritualism. One such illustrious Syed was Mir Syed Hussain, who approached Nunda Rishi for enlightenment and obtained spiritual guidance.

It is being emphasized lately by some that Alamdar-i-Kashmır, joined the Kubrahvi order at the instance of Syed Mir Mohammad Hamdani and became his disciple. In this connection, a statement purported to have been written by the Syed and known as "Khat-i-Irshad" is being quoted to assert the claim. The gist of the statement is:

"All thanks are due to Almighty, who has given us guidance and saved us from the onslaught of Ahil-i-Biddat and Ahil-i-Hawa....... I have been guided by my father in Kubravi-Hussaini, order............ My brother Noor-ud-Din Rishi Kashmiri, who is pious, saint, miraculous, has implored and begged to be included in the above order. Hence I have permitted him to take disciples, accept presents from them ....written 814 A.H.Sealed."

This document appears to be a forged one, for it is not signed. Secondly, Ahil-Biddat and Ahil-i-Hawa is a derogatory term used

against a school of thought in Islam, which came into vogue during the Dogra period (19th century A.D.) The concerned sect in Islam came to prominence after the establishment of Saudi dynastical rule in Arabia. How could this term be used in th 19th century? Thirdly other statement is produced in case of other divines saints, and Yogis of Kashmir, why only one particular saint is mentioned, shows that it is an intentional attempt to forge a document. Why this document is written in Arabic, when Syed Mohammed Hamdani wrote in Persian, is anther point for consideration.

Accepting of presents or donations from disciples or obtaining a mandate from others for getting alms, does not befit the stature of Alamdar-i-Kashmir, Sheikh Noor-ud-Din Wali

A Rishi is a person, who has attained light by strict observance of penances. He renounces the world and has not connection with wives or children. He burns his whole existence in the love of God and recognises the supreme self. He is completely detached from the material world. A Rishi is a spiritual guide, a post of vision and mystical genis combined in one body.

Sultan Zein -ul-Abadin's reign ushered an are.of religious toleration. His benevolent act was that of granting religious liberty to his subjects. He patronize-d the Brahmanas. He also patronized religious toleration by propagating a moral outlook on life[18]. He also reduced the Jaziya from three pala (of silver) to one Masa[19].

He had a great passion for architecture and in this respect he can be called as the Shah Jahan of Kashmir. The Sultan repaired some of the ruined temples and this fact has been given various Persian manuscripts such as Tarikh-i- Hassan, Tuhfat-ul-Ahbab and Baharistan-i- Shahi. Jonaraja also makes mentions of this fact.[20] Besides a large number of buildings, palaces and towns are associated with his name.[21] and these definitely testify to his great passion for architecture and town planing. The Sultan founded the town of Srinagar (then known as Zaina Nagar, modern Noweshra), Zainkot, Zainpora , Zainagir, Zainagam and Zaina Tilak. In the Dal lake, he laid down some small islands of Rupa Lank and Sona Lank[22] . The Sultan also built a palace, a mosque and a garden on Zaina Lank, an island in the walur Lake in 1443[23]-44. Zain -ul-Abadin also competed-d the Jamia Masjid, the construction of which had been started by sikandar. He also constructed in the town of Sopore, a swinging bried[24].

In words of Srivira, his contemporary " time is endless, and great

is the expense of the world, so that some future kings in some distant country may believe it possible for them to perform such worthy, and enterprising acts, and accomplish deeds which may almost rival his[25]. That by itself manifests the summit of grandeur, glory and popularity which the Sultan Zain-ul-Abadin had achieved[26] ana he deserves the name of the great king Budshah.

Precise to say, during the last years of Sheikh-ul-Alam's life, Kashmir had attained the highest level of prosperity in almost every field. Her social life too had been considerably enriched and had given birth to a culture of high order, which no doubt found the strongest motive-force in the aesthetic selecticism of Sultan Zain-ul-Abidin.

Alamdar-i- Kashmir, Sheikh Noor-ud-Din Wali, was the mystical genius of the 14th century, for whom, both the Muslims and the Hindus had a great reverence. While the Muslims had given him the title of "Alamdar" or the Standard-Bearer of the Rishis of Kashmir, the Hindus would call him by the name of "Sehaza-nanda" the one who has realised Self. He was a saint of that order, who sacrifice their body, life and existence for the sake of God and mix their personality with the Supreme Soul.

Ishtiaq Fida

Editor's Note:-

1. It would be rash to call the khat-i-irshad to be a forged document without waiting for a detailed examination by researchers and their final examination. Perhaps the Nund Reshi Chair, proposed to be instituted in the University of Kashmir may help provide answers to this and such questions.
2. The assertion that the Syeds fled Persia and Central Asia under a threat from Amir Timur has been contested by Dr. Shams-ud-din Ahmad in his book "Shah Hamdan - Hyaat Aur Karnamay"- 1996.

References

1. Jonaraja; Raja Rajatarangani, Trans. S. K. Kaul, PP 22-23
2. Lha- Chen-d Nrub was the ruler of Ladakh from 1290 to 1320. Francke, Antiquities of Indian Tibet. Vol. II P 98.
3. Jonaraja; Rajatranagani, trans. S. K. Kaul P 65.

4. Baharistan-i-Shahi, P 56, Hider Malik, Chadora; Tarikh-i-Kashmir, P 35. (named him as Ziladar Khan.)
5. Jonaraja; rajatarangani, St. 159.
6. Parmu; R. K. History of Muslim Rule in Kashmir, PP 73-74
7. Haider Malik Chadura; Tarikh-i-Kashmir, P 32.
8. Hassan Shah; Tarikh-i- Kashmir, II pP 166
9. Dutt J.C; Kings of Kashmir, P 4
10. Jonaraja; rajatarangani, P 48
11. Ibid, PP 51-52.
12. Stein; Rajatarangini.
13. Jonaraja; Rajatarangani, St. 548-556.
14. Mohibul Hassan; Kashmir under the Sultans, P 64.
15. Mohibul Hassan; Kashmir under the Sultans, P. 64-65.
16. Jonaraja; Rajtarangani, Trans. S. K. Koul St. 565-97.
17. Lawrence W; the Valley of Kashmir, PP. 162 and 213.
18. Rajatarangari of Jonaraja, Trans. S. K. Koul, P. 105
19. According to Kashmiri system; 1 tola is equal to 16 masas (Ain-i- Akbari, PP. 355-56") so 3 Palas-12 tolas-192 masas. I tola was levied instead of 192 masas.
20. Jonaraja; Rajtarangni, Vrs. 499
21. Tarikh-Rashidi, Trans. Elliot and Dowson PP 434.
22. Srivara; Rajatarangani, trans. J.C. Dutt. PP 141-42.
23. Stone slab bearing chronogram gives the date and construction of the edifice.
24. Srivana; Rajatarangani, PP 155-56.
25. Srivira; Rajatrangani, PP 90.
26. Ibid P. 174.

PHILOSOPHY OF NUND RISHI

"Adherents of all religions at the times of misery and unhappiness supplicate Me, alone for peace and bliss and seek refuge in Me, yet how strange it is that believing in Me, they do not know Me, nor do they know their selves. If they were to know Me the wonderful God, their lives would also become wonderful (i.e.), full of complete purity, peace and prosperity."

Philosophy and religion have their distinctly different fields in the West. The former consists of pure reasoning, based on the principles of logic and the latter consists of devotional worship based on faith. But that is not the case with Indian philosophy which has two main aspects. The theoretical one and the practical one. The former one of these aspects is the same reasoning based on logic but the latter one is very closely related to the finer aspect of religion leading to liberation (Heaven). Logic, in the view of Indian thinkers of the highest order, is only an aid that helps an aspirant in attaining a clear conception of the exact reality. It being based on human conceptions and human convictions cannot reach that eternally existing and real aspect of the exact reality, which is beyond the reach of all speech and all thoughts. Only the conception of the exact reality can, according to Indian scholars, be discussed and explained through philosophic treatises. An aspirant having understood that aspect of the truth is advised to look for its eternal and transcendental aspect with the help of his own self-awareness. The practical aspect of Indian philosophy comes to his help and awakens his initiation through which he has a direct experience of the exact reality. Some great philosophers of India have supplemented their logical expensational of the truth by its poetic expressions, which go very often to the deeper levels of its nature, because poetry, arousing the intuition of a person, can take him into some interior secrets of the truth through its power of suggestion. The Valley of Kashmir keeps its great beauty hidden inside in mountains, hills and forests. The saints of Kashmir have also been keeping the nectar of their spiritual attainment hidden under the cover of worldly activities in the manner of a coconut shell. Kashmir has made significant contribution to the Asian

culture. It is a haunt of sages and scholars, who preached their spiritualism for the benefit of human creatures in the sacred lap of mother Kashmir. The Valley has been fortunate in having many philosophers, saints, poets, right from the ancient ages. The immortal Sanskrit poet Kalidass also praises Kashmir in these words; " Kashmir is more attractive and beautiful than heaven. One finds perfect peace and solace and I feel I am taking bath in the ocean of nectar here." Lord Buddha after visiting Kashmir praised it in these words "Kashmir was the best land for meditation and abode of saints, philosophers". Kalhana a great Kashmir historian writes in his book Rajatarangni: "it is a country where the sun shines wildly being the place created by Rishi Kashpa as for his glory".

The great Kashmir thinkers, like Utpaldeva, Abhinavagupta were poets as well. The philosophy expressed by them through the medium of poetry is very often more effective and useful than that discussed by them through the method of logic. That tradition of composition of philosophic poetry continued in the Valley for centuries.

Lalishwari, one of the great saints of Kashmir in the 14th century, gave a popular turn to that tradition by composing such poetry in the language of common people, that is modern Kashmiri language. She adopted that style of poetic prose which was already prevalent. Shiva saints wrote in that style which was latter on called , the style of Vakhs.

The style was fully evolved and made popular by the patron saint of Kashmir i.e.: Nund Rishi:, who later on expressed his philosophy through Shurakas. God sends his messengers in this world from time to time to guide his human creations. Nund Rishi was one of these messengers who lit the lamps of ethical knowledge for the benefit of the humanity. His aim was to illuminate the world with his philosophy, universal brotherhood, based upon his conviction i.e. faith in God and brotherhood. He preached the philosophy of communal and religious harmony. He simply illuminated preexisting religious convictions. He was the torch bearer of secularism and fraternity. According to his philosophy both "Ram and Rahim" are different names of the Supreme power, who guides the destiny of the whole creations. Different religions are merely different paths leading to the same goal. He taught the common people to practise religion not merely as a creed, but to make it a life. According to his vision, rendering of service to the poor and

down trodden is the greatest service to God, and that service to the humanity is the passport to the heaven. He always stressed on the essence of all religions that is to do good deeds and to think of good thoughts.

A man is born to no purpose who having rare privilege of being born as a man, is unable to realize God in this life. His mission was to awaken love for God in the souls of men. " I prefer a soul to a crowd and I love crowds of souls." He reminds us that God is the sole creator and sustainer of the universe. All man's ills stem from disassociation from the very source of his life and being. Life and death are impenetrable mysteries. For men like Nund Reshi, death is not an end to life, but all human beings have to answer for their good or bad actions done during their life span.

His life was filled with love, peace, Godhood, purity of thoughts and actions, and contempt for worldly desires. His teachings are such that followers of all religions in our Valley find in it the embodiment of their own highest ideals, and the means to realize more fully their individual spiritual goals. Western philosophy teaches that the highest goal of man is to know "thyself", but Nund Reshi teaches us: 'Realize thyself" and defines self realization as the "knowing in the body, mind, soul that we are one with the omnipresence of God. That we do not have to pray; that it comes to us, that we are not merely near it at all times, but God's omnipresence is our omnipresence, Nund Reshi mentioned in his following shruk.

"I searched here and there
I searched day and night.
I found my Master in my heart
That was omen to start".

According to Nund Reshi, Truth is higher, but higher is the truthful conduct. Truth is exact conformance with reality. Truth is eternal, it is one. Truth is beauty, love completeness, joy and strength Truth uplights, fresh, unites with :God' and with all of life. You shall know the truth and truth shall make you free from all sins. This is the purpose of every religion. But what does it mean to know the truth says Nund Reshi. Wisdom is not assimilated with the eyes but with the atoms or points. His teachings offers one the opportunity to assimilate truth " with the Atoms', for he teaches the inner contact and communion with the Divine source, from which all truth, like an endless river ceaselessly flows. The effort

to know and manifest more of the love of God is inherent in man. Even as a tree is inherent in the seed and its presence gives rise to the struggle for growth, so man is struggling for growth that will culminate in his perfect expression of God. He was the true apostle of secularism based on mutual harmony, tolerance and social equality. He quotes as under:

"God pervades everywhere
Do not differentiate between Hindus/ Muslims
If you are intelligent, recognize your own self.
This is true acquaintance with God".

To Nund Reshi, love of God means to have Him always in our consciousness, to see Him in all life, and to have no desire, but to be met with Him and to do His will. With this experience of God, the mind is content and ceases its restless search, the heart is satisfied and ceases to yearn after endless desires, the soul is fulfilled in union with the eternal joy of God, from which it has long been separated by delusions. With that ultimate experience, liberation (Heaven) is attained, truth is attained and love is attained.

Love is a man's greatest wealth. Love is the form of God, dwelling in man, love is the nature of Lord, noblest of all qualities and worthy of reverence. Chant with love the name of Allah. Pure love is undeath of an only son of a mother. Oh seeker: do not seek bread or cloth, wealth and fame, but seek the Allah in whom these dwell. Unless and until one attains divine knowledge, the life spent in eating, drinking, and enjoying, in the end repenting while dyeing is no life at all- it is worthless. Where there is inner peace, outer calm cease, and all dealings are free from anxieties- As per Nund Reshi the perfect attainment dwells these and one can sing as Nund Reshi did in joyous praise after his twelve year's long penance.

a. "It is the mercy of my true lord that has made me to know the unknown"
b. I have learned from Him how to walk without feet, to see without eyes, to hear without ears, to drink without mouth, to fly without wings.
c. I have brought my love and renunciation into the land where there is no sun and moon, nor day and night.
d. Without eating I have tasted the sweetness of nectar, and without water I have quenched my thirst.
e. The lord is great beyond words and great is the good fortune of true devotees.

According to Nund Reshi's philosophy, lust, anger and covetousness are three gates of hell. Jealousy, lack of interest, irritability being over suspicious and living upon others fortunes, leads to misery, and immoral character. Gambling, drinking, harshness of speed and misuse of wealth leads to calamity. In the view of Nund Reshi, to attain bliss of God, understand yourself, see yourself, seek yourself and find yourself. Meditate on your ownself and chant the sacred name of God with full control on senses. To live on the fruits of your own labour, do your work without disturbing others. Learn to sit in a natural manner, becoming steady, calm and detached, the more you sit still, the steadier your mind will become from the philosophy of Nund Reshi. Enlightenment does not come from extensive study or by learned discussion or through the intellect. It comes of itself when one's self intensely yearns for realization, but, not unless the mind has turned away from evil and has learned to control itself, to be at peace with the world. One who sees all beings in his own body and his own soul, in all beings, he hates no one. When the knower realizes that all beings are one with himself, what sorrow or what illusion can there be.

Regarding diet his contentions were that eat food with love, with contentment, to live to acquire strength. To take food, understanding its importance, to live, in the awareness of the inner self. He has refused to take meat, it proves he was a great believer in Ahimsa.

It is desire and anger and insatiable in its hunger, the cause of all sins, errors man's chiefest enemy. Devotion to God is of the heart alone and this is exceedingly rare and difficult. The way of pure devotion is so narrow as one tenth part of a mustered seed. His lofty message proclaiming the sublime heights of mystical realization and devine communion lifting man above all parochial limits of castes, creeds, sects and denominations.

For know the aim of life is to realize the God in this life.

To conclude, the essence of Nund Reshi's philosophy is love, truth, self control, brotherhood and secularism. Men like him come to the world from time to time to guide the straying humanity. Their messages, teachings, show the path of right living for generations to come.

For great souls death is fuller life, not an extinction. Nund Reshi joins the conclave of divine souls who lived on earth as an incarnations of light, of truth, to illuminate the pathways of

mankind.

According to great historians, saints shine like a star across the span of centuries as perfect as ever and Nund Reshi also joined the cluster of stars for all times to come.

If such great souls will not enter on the surface of the earth, the universe will perish in darkness, ignorance and the nature will go against the will of human creatures.

Ms. Vijay Pandita

HARMONIOUS ASPECT OF RISHI CULT

Kashmir enjoys a distinct position in the sub-continent of India as regards the development of philosophy, religion and religious reform movements. The advent of Islam in Kashmir also enjoys a peculiar condition than rest of the country. In the initial stages the spread of Islam in the Valley was not by force or compulsion. It was because of the common similarities between Islam and the Shavist Philosophy, the predominant philosophy of the life of Kashmir that Islam made headway in the valley. Both preached fundamental similarities of spiritual and sociological set-ups.

Historical Background:

Historical background of Rishi Cult does not start from the 13th and 14th century; Its roots are allianced with its continuous cultural heritage which goes back to Neelmata era where frequently the establishment of Rishi-Aashramas and their placement is mentioned. In 13th, 14th century Muslim and Hindus both believed in monotheism, as Shivism fundamentally believes in monotheism like Islam. Hindus believed that Shiva is only God and we must bow to him alone. Muslims also preached that God and is one "Alah". Both the religions favoured taking of meat. There were many other things common, that socially and religiously both the communities were one. But it was Shah-i-Hamdan who preached the pure Muslim doctrine and the two communities both socially and religiously as per Mohibul Hassan were driven apart. This created hatred among the two communities. At this crucial stage Rishism got revived to bring the two communities close because Rishi cult preached universal Love and desired of a man to lead a contented, simple and purposeful life, and to bow to God who was one and universal. This can be well understood by the verse of Kabir:

Hindu Turkh Donoo Ha Bayi
Ik Mitiya Kaa Bandaya
Wahi Mohammad Wahi Mahadev Khalaya.

What Kabir preached in 15th century, was already preached by

the Rishis of Kashmir hundred of years early.

Nunda Rishi was the cultural product of this continuity. The rise of Rishi cult during Nund Rishi's time was favoured by the then existing conducive atmosphere also. The King of Kashmir Bkdshah who ruled then was a secular person who helped the cult to flourish so as to bring the two communities closer who had drifted apart during the time of Sikender "Butshiken"

Origin and continuity of Rishi Cult:

The word Rishi is a Sanskrit word which was used in Vedic in Rugved. In whole of India this tradition has almost disappeared but the word Rishi is still preserved in Kashmir. Neelmat Purana the oldest source of history of Kashmir mentions that Ashramas were built for Rishis in distant parts which gradually changed into Homes. There are still a number of places in Kashmir which have preserved the word home with their names i e. Beehome, Kichhome, Dhenihome, Burzahome etc.

These Rishis were always remaining aloof from proper cities, as in evident from the Geography of Kashmir, for self purification. Rishi Cult is also found in Chuma Pada. The basic problem which is very important, so far the Rishi literature is concerned, we have to see its continuous development which in fact starts from the available Chumpada. Prior to Chum nothing is available in history of Kashmiri literature. The worst development of the Chuma-pada corresponds with metric development of Mahanaya verses, lalavakyas and rishi shrukyas. Therefore, this literary development invites a special interest that the expression of the shrukyas is in no way a sudden development. This continuity which in the poetry is supposed a gradual historical development. In Chumapada the closing rhyme of the verse corresponds with the third Rhyme, while the second closing rhyme corresponds with the third rhyme. Some technic of the rhyme has been adopted by Mahnaya Prakasha and same gradual development is found in vakayas and shrukyas.

If chronological classification of the worth literature is classified, it gives a detailed account like this:

8th-9th	Chumma
10th-11th	Mahanaya Prakaash
12th-13th	Sanskrit Kalaam/Pandit Kalaam
14th-15th	Lala and Nunda Rishi

: All these are pertaining to spiritual aspect.

Lalishuri: In fact nobody has given the cultural history of the three centuries i.e. 12th, 13th and 14th. This is a remarkable aspect that Lalded being the part and parcel of this cult has been placed altogether separate. But available sources of the Vakayas and the shrukayas simply indicates that the hermit lady who in fact inspired and revised this cult was herself of the same cult. Since the contents and approach of the philosophy does not show anywhere that Lalded was not of the same stream, this seems very plausible that the religion must have deliberately separated her. The very important aspect which supports this view are Vakayas and shrukayas. Since it is linguistically very difficult to separate their morphoforms. The applied linguistics does not show any separation in the expression. It is this great lady who while compiling the verses preserved the language and gave philosophical life to it. Lalishuri was the main personality who enriched Rishi cult. This we can well realise by the verse of Nund Rishi which is as follow:

" Ami Padman Poruchi Lale
Ami Gale Amrit Chova
Su Satii Parmarth Vati
Tatti Me Var Ditu Daiyi"

This means that Nund Rishi treates her far superior in spiritualism. He in this verse prays to God to give him the same boo as of Lalishuri. The influence of Lal on Nund Rishi was very great. The study of the verses of both amply testify to this contention. Right from child birth he remained under her influence. It is believed that he refused to suckle the breast of his mother just after his birth and the baby Nund Rishi was taken to Lalishuri who addressed him in the following verse:

" Zana Mand Chokh Na
Chana Chukh Mandchha"

The child just then sucked his mother. Thus we can say Nund Rishi was the offshoot of Lalishuri.

Rishism is purification of life which is a must in this world.

Ms. Santosh Bakaya

LEAVES OF CHINAR

Sheikh, Noor-ud-din Wali. Patron Saint of Kashmir, was younger contemporary of Lalded. He lived from 1377 A.D.to 1438 A.D.Also known as Nund Rishi, he founded the order of Rishis in Kashmir. His poetic compositions are known as 'Shruks' in Kashmiri (Shaluks in Sanskrit)

Some of the Shruks:

He who harness his heart to purify the speech of others, will earn free admittance to the mosque of spirituality.

Having taken birth I was nursed and reared by my mother, a wooden cradle was constructed for me.

Having frown up I was thrown to wolves, nobody cared for me, even my kith and kin dispossessed me of my happy home and heart. Having become senile and old, I realised they my coming to life was a hoax, a terrible calamity. At every inch of my closing life, I feel despondent and forlorn.

Having cast off my mortal frame, everybody will forget me, as if they owed nothing to me, or I to them. Actually in the life-hereafter all the scores need be settled.

* * * *

Having been born into this transitory world, our destination, spiritual of course, eludes us, as we are fondled by a nurse we depend on external expedients.

Having sufficiently grown up, we are lost in the maze of worldly attractions, illusory in form and content.

So, Dear Mr. At the penultimate stage of our life, we have perforce to teach that very place of deluding nature for which we invest all these years right from our birth.

* * * *

The Man was carved out of clay, so folding of clay-hands will be of no avail

All the nicest dainties grow out of clay and cooking is also done in clay vessels.

The souls having flown away, the body is reduced to clay. The essence of Human existence is clay mixing with clay.

* * * *

Take that much only which agrees with your system. Do not be in hot haste which disturbs the mental equilibrium. Slowly and steadily. eat only to live so that you can keep your body and soul together. This kind of discipline will inevitably open for you the six channels through which " Kundallini' passes and gets immersed in super soul.

* * * *

While starting the trade, getting initiated, your ego will be as pronounced as the jingling of bronze cymbals. In the defeating noise, you shall have to turn a deaf ear to that sound of silence. During sojourn all around, I could only perceive vile impostors, so you cannot earn the epithet of a virtuous being.

* * * *

As long as the climate is favorable, make hay while the sun shines with rapt dedication. Banishing malice for the people, you may undertake to build a house affording refuge and shelter to each and everybody, through your personal labour and earnings. The bee deposits honey in heaps for others to relish, and, having repaid what she owned, flies away with no remorse at all for the love's labour lost.

* * * *

Some got blisters even with cold water and some through mental drill transformed themselves into fire personified.Some found precious rubies our of crushed rubble, and some returned empty handed from Ceylon even.

* * * *

Assembling the tools of worldly enjoyment, I became disparity on seeing their nebulous and slippery nature. The demon of human carvings is fathomless and instatable. The worldly bounties whetted my desires as that of a hungry man, O God, did not bless me with Divine knowledge here, how can I attain it hereafter.

* * * *

Even though posing like a dervish, yoked to staff and pray carpet, yet are burdened with rancor, spite and envy. How can such an impostor comprehend the exact import of denying a meal. Hence he cannot own unwavering faith in God.

* * * *

He, who is scared of death, and never tired of recounting its addities, cannot fulfill the obligations enjoined by the Islamic "Shariat" He who is guided always by his inborn perception, will

alone attain perennial beatitude, Avarice and lust will die down in him for mere asking. Therefore, you need not degenerated into performing riguals to avoid the fear of death, which is essentially inviable.

* * * *

When at the conclusion of my penance, I perceive you, in essence, within my own self, then no worldly enticements can enchain me I shall feel as if the fog of ignorance has melted away, and the afflictions relevant to the world have completely been mastered by me Hence, o Great God, banish my sins.

Forsaking all worldly ties, I pinned my unswerving faith in you, I lost the count of days in your search. At length when I detected your Benign-self in my own limited self, then the distance between you and me was bridged diversity changed to unity.

* * * *

O Great lord, under the pretext of attaining birth in this world, my life got sandwiched between fleeting affirmation and ephemeral negation. Showers of your universal compassion will pour down inevitably, out of which if I sip a drop or two like a sparrow, I shall feel extremely gratified.

* * * *

Translated by K. N. Dhar

THE MYSTIC RISHIES

It is mainly the saint singers of medieval India who have laid the foundation of this composite culture of ours. They attempted and achieved in a large measure a synthesis of various cultural movements. Most of the modern Indian languages emerged during the early centuries of the second millennium and in most cases their beginning is marked by the voices of poets of great moral and spiritual height. Such were, indeed, those of Yogini Lalleshwari, popularly known as Lal Ded (Granma Ded) and her younger contemporary Sheikh Nur-ud-Din,the early makers of Kashmiri.

It so happens that in regions like Kashmir and Gujarat, the efflorescence of the local language takes place after Sanskrit ceases to be patronized by Hindu rulers and persian is introduced as the court language of the Muslim Sultanate.

Kashmir is known as a centre of learning.When Acharya Hemachandra of Gujarat planned to write his monumental grammer, Siddha-Hema, in Sanskrit, in the mid twelfth century, the first thing he did was to have emissaries sent to Sharada Desh, Kashmir, to get copies of standard works of grammer.

May I cite the case of Abhinavagupta, the great Savant of Kashmir, a most outstanding name in the history of aesthetics? When I met the late. I.A. Richards, at Harvard in mid-fifties, I told him how illuminating Abhinava's writings were with regard to the problems he was struggling with in his "Principles of Literature."

Buddhist Influence

By the time of Abhinava, Kashmir Sahaivism had already gained ground as one of the more important philosophical systems thanks to Abhinava himself, among others. Earlier, Buddihsm had had a sway for quite a long period not only in Kashmir but also beyond its borders. Kashmir must have been , because of its geographical position, an important centre, radiating Buddhist influence to Central Asian countries and to far-off Siberia, Mongolia, Northern China and Japan. Kashmir seems to to have encouraged a to and fro movement of ideas. Some point out the affinities between the approaches of the great Muslim Savant Avicenna (Ibn Sina) and

Abhinavagupta.

The third cultural phenomenon, after the Buddhist and the Shaivite, occurred as a result of a great upheaval. Timur's tyrrany and persecution or an act of fate that forced His Holiness Sayyad Ali Hamadani, "Shah Hamdan," to Center Kashmir with 700 Sayyad followers in 1372, about five years before Sheikh Nur-ud-din's birth, resulting in the ~~impact~~ and spread of Islam in a big way. Lal ded's full-thrated song of Shiva mysticism had already captivated the hearts of even common folk.The accent of her Vaakh (vakya)was not a dogma but an experience, as is the case with all mystic traditions. The younger contemporary, described also as a "milk child" Sheikh Nur-ud-Din ,a Muslim, sang his Shrukh (i.e. "Shloka", the Sanskrit word for stanza), which is patterned on the Persian Bahar rhythm. There is evidently a groping for newer snythesis.

Crucible of Synthesis

History has held kashmir as a crucible of synthesis.To the spiritually intoxicated men and women, to the seekers after the truth of life, who were not so much interested in dogma and orthodoxies as in actual experience, Shaiva mysticism as even the earlier Buddhist mysticism as well as the message of Islam and consequently that of the Islamic tradition of Sufism all seemed to be blending into a happy amalgam and forming the very staple food for spiritual sustenance.

One more influence, enriching the spiritual life of North India of yore was to come from the South, that of Bhakti, as propounded by Ramanuja (12th century,) who posited God as apart from one's individual soul and propounded that he could be realized only through passionate love. The position the Syed Ali Hujiwiri, (Data Ganj Baksh) and Farid-ud-Din Attar take up vis-a-vis the monist Sufi Abu Yazid's "Miraj", in order to conform to Islamic tenets, is almost similar to that of Ramanuja, according to Prof. Zachner. It was through Ramananda (c. 1370-1440) who had grown in the tradition of Ramanuja and was a contemporary of Sheikh Nur-ud-din that the *bhakti* wave swept through the northern part of India. Ramananda worked against caste and his Bhakti movement went well with the Islamic faith.

It is interesting to observe how Hindu mysticism and Muslim mysticism influenced each other. During the medieval period there appeared men of religious genius from among Hindus in India and

Muslims in India as well as beyond its border. There was more traffic of ideas between Hindu and Muslim seekers as well as an inevitable attempt at synthesis, than historians can possibly trace definitely. In India, it was in Kabir (15th century), Muslim weaver of Varanasi and disciple of Raranạnda, that the process of synthesis reached its peak and achieved an articulation which reminds one of Upanishadic utterances.

Founder of Rishism in Kashmir

What is unique about Sheikh Nur-ud-din is the fact of his having propounded the order of Rishis in Kashmir. This has earned him the title "Pir-e-Rishiyan". This order claimed members from amongst both Hindus and Muslims and created a climate of tolerance and love. Even after a hundred and fifty years, Abul Fazl noted the existence of two thousand Rishis in Kashmir and added that they were "the most respectable people ......who, although they do not suffer themselves to be fettered by tradition, are doubtless true worshipers of God. They revile not any other sect and ask nothing of anyone, they plant wayside fruit-trees, they abstain from flesh and have no intercourse with the other sex." Jehangir also pays an eloquent tribute in his Memoirs, "Tuzk-i- Jehangiri.:

"They restrain the tongue of desire and the foot of seeking and eat no flesh. They have no wives, and always plant fruitbearing trees, desiring no advantage." No wonder, that an Afghan Governor, Atta Mohammad Khan, struck coins in the name of Sheikh Nur-ud-din, after nearly four centuries, in order to endear himself to his followers.

Even before Pir-e-Rishiyan, Khawaja Moin-ud-din Chisti, the first Sufi who came to Delhi in 1193 and settled down near Pushkar in Ajmer had disciples from both Muslims and Hindus. Acharya Kshiti Mohan Sen notes that in Pushkar he had come across followers of the great teacher Chisti, who called themselves "Husaini Brahmins".

Another parallel worth noting is that of Dadu (16th century), also from a Muslim family like his guru Kabir, who founded the Brahma Sampradaya, the Brahma Society.

The great singers of medieval India seem to have covered amongst themselves the whole gamut of Hindu Muslim mysticism.

Mysticism Explained

What is mysticism "Maal-tasawwuf?" In English the word seems to have originated with none too happy a connotation. The conscise

Oxford Dictionary adds immediately, after entering the word "mysticism" in brakets "often contempt" i.e. it is often contemptuous term. The first thing that mysticism implies is very aptly expressed in Hamlet's remark".there are more things in heaven and earth, Horatio, than are dreamt of in your philosophy." Logical reasoning is looked upon as tool that falls far too short of grasping the Total Reality. In the context of the play, "Hamlet" however, this special pleading would seem to end up in a belief in ghosts, in the return of the dead ones to this everyday world in their original form. So also the mere discrediting of rationality would land one in a type of mysticism which would encourage belief in miraculous cures, trinkets, occult powers like those of walking on water or making a rope stand on end, or making auguries and prophesies. No wonder, "mysticism" acquired a pejorative sense. However, there was much sense in asserting that reason alone does not make sense. There appeared some serious and sincere persons, who lived upto the demand for forging another rather superior instrument for grasping the reality behind this apparent world.Their example showed how at peace one could be with one's own self and also, rather therefore with the world. The tern "mysticism", came to acquire more propitious, shall we say prestigious, associations.

So mysticism primarily means an intuitive grasp of the truth of life which remains outside the purview of sense perception or mere reasoning.

Secondly, mysticism emphasises that it is more a matter of initiation into a path, more a matter of actual practice than that of speculation or theorizing.

Thirdly, mysticism cuts across all differentiations and eschews distinctions of caste, sect, race, sex, age, etc, and concentrates on the unity of all life.It turns its back on the possession of earthly things and on worldly gains, its paramount aim being the total dissolution of the sense of an individual ego and an ecstatic union with God or the Ultimate Reality.

Fourthly, mysticism pins its faith on achieving the goal of union with God or the Ultimate Reality through love, through passionate. all-consuming love.

These stand out as some of the more silent traits, when we examine the lives and teachings of various mystics.

The mystic utterance has a resonance which invokes consciousness conducive to an intuitive apprehension of Truth. It

attempts to reflect the ecstasy of the mystic experience. As a matter of fact, all poetry is the outcome of intuition, Mystic poetry has intuitive experience as its very stuff.

Streak of Mysticism

All languages have a body of mystic poetry or at least a streak of mysticism in the outpourings of some poets. As far as the modern Indian languages are concerned, their very emergence coincides with the bhakti wave sweeping across the length and breadth of the country.Tamil had already its galaxy of Alavars, culminating in Ramanuja, Kannada built up a body of vachana literature. Sindhi, which was more under the influence of sufism than that of bhakti, produced the impressive mystic work of Shah Latif and others. In the eastern part of the sub-continent a rich variety of mystical writing developed amongst the illiterate but highly enlightened seekers, who were also normally house holders, I mean the Bauls, the singers of the inimitable Bengali Baul songs. The Bauls simply spurn caste or communal distinctions and a most outstanding Baul singer is Lalan, a Muslim.

That the truth of life escapes logical reasoning and is best grasped intuitively, is expressed in a variety of beautiful ways by our poets. They do not tire of asserting that is not a matter of empirical knowledge either. A poet of the modern age, Tagore, affirms while in his teens, :You are in every eye. The eye cannot see you." Lalan has dwelt on the same truth.

Knowledge about one's self

The knowledge, one is in dire need of, is the knowledge about one's own self. The Bauls have coined a beautiful image, they refer to the Bual Self as "manar manush" the man of my heart.In the hope of meeting the man of my heart, I wander from land to land."The agony of separation is heightened by the question:"Who is the man of my heart and where shall I find him". Another such image is that of 'the guest'.

"Strange are the ways of my guest. And strange his knocks at my door.... In many a forgotten birth, he has appeared to me in many guises. And Malan cannot turn him away saying, I do not know you, my strange guest."

The mystic is a person who is genuinely spiritual and therefore ignores all ritual and struggles to come to grips with the Reality.Raidas, the cobbler saint says:

"The whole world is floundering even while repeating the name

of Ram. That Rama is certainly not my Rama."

Then Raidas adds that the agony of separation from him, whom he is seeking, connot disappear even though the Vedas prescribe a million rituals. He averts the mystic's unmistakable sense of fulfilment:.

"I walked and walked, my mind is fatigued. I cannot move a step further. Now within my own self I realize him, for whom I was wandering far and wide."

The mysitc aims with singular singlemindedness at nothing less than self realization.He has no stomach for either philosophy or rituals. He is a spiritual practitioner and no idle theorist or dogmatist.

The practice does mean some discipline. The initiated aspirant does take to a path.A high moral code is implied in such a spiritual career. However, what distinguishes the mystics from other men is a high degree of non conformism. This puts them in opposition to staunch orthodoxies. There are well known eases of mystics (Sufis) having suffered in the Islamic world. The mystics are often treated as madmen and that sometimes shields them from utter ruin. However, this non-confromism of mystics is not there just for the sake of nor conformism.The mystics by and large , believe that the best course to adopt for spiritual advancement is that which comes natural, that which is sahaj. Their belief is: naksha hukum imparat chale, vriksha chale nij leela, a building gets constructed as par plan but a tree grows as it likes. Kabir lay much store by the sahaj way of spiritual ripening. It is little surprise that Sheikh Nur-ud-din is also known as Sahazanand.

Nonconformist Mystic

These non-conformist mystics were the last persons to abide by caste and such other distinctions. Kabir, Dadu, Namdev, Akho, all spurn and hold up to ridicule distinctions of caste, race, dogma etc. They are against all hypocrisy and lifeless routine.

The mystics" supreme concern is with direct confrontation with God or Reality.They are anything but bookish and erudite. They gloat over not being burdened with learning or with honour:

"It is lucky that I am empty vessel. For when you swim. I keep floating by your side. Your full vessels are left on the empty shore. They are for use. But I am carried into the river in your arms and I dance to the rhythm of your heart-throbs and the heaving of the waves."

The mystic's way is the way of the lover. His is a soul aflame with love. The nearest analogy for the relationship between the mystic and God that suggests itself is that of the lover and the beloved. The Veda and the Upanished analogy, the letter say "Just as the embraced by a beloved woman is not conscious of either what is outside or what is within, even so this person embraced by the soul that is knowledge itself is not aware either of what is outside or of what is within" The Christian mystics use this analogy and so do the Muslim Sufis. As a matter of fact the union through impassioned love is such that no consciousness of even who is a male and who is a female remains:

"Four eyes met and there were changes in two souls Now I do not know whether he is a man and I a woman or he is a woman and I a man. This only I know. Formerly there were two. Love came and now there is one."

Islam and Sufism Dove-tailed

The idea of the dissolution of the sense of separateness between the individual soul and the supreme Almighty or the Ultimate Reality has been under fire especially from orthodox quarters. Islam has on the whole accommodated Sufism, which can be legitimately credited with propagating the best of Islam in a most influential manner. However, Islamic orthodoxy found it difficult to brook the monastic teaching of Mansur-al- Hallaj, who preached Ana'I haqq, and Abu Yazid's teaching "I am He" was taken with a pinch of salt and there were attempts to bring his "Miraj" within the four corners of orthodox belief.

There is another difficulty also. The idea of the union of the individual soul with God through love is fraught with the danger of love degenerating into laxity of sex behaviour in actual life, in the absence of an ego-consuming fire of love, burning within. That is why esoteric cults like those of the bauls have been looked upon with some suspicion.

That the mystic longs for the dissolution of his individual self in the Supreme does not mean that he has turned his back on the beauty that this earthly abode is clothed with.Dadu asks:"How, O Lord, you come to create it? What sudden wave of joy coursing through your being compelled its own manifestation? Or was it just your fancy to revel in the play of form?or is it that you would see your inborn delight thus take shape?". Narsimha Mehta of Gujarat describes this with a sublime image:

Brahma latakan kare Brahma Pase-" The Cosmic Spirit dances playfully before the Cosmic Spirit."

The mystic is not of the world but is very much with the world. The visible world is to him a sound evidence of the Invisible."O Invisible, Unapproachable, Unfathomable", Dadu has no desire to know: he is satisfied to remain enraptured with all this beauty of yours, and to rejoiced in it with you."

In order to give a vivid idea of this ecstatic predilection of the mystic, I can hardly do better than repeat an intimatable shurkh of Sheikh Nur-ud-din, Pir-e-Rishiyan:

"The lover is the one in whom desire
Has melted self to shine like heated gold.
The heart, transfigured by this radiant fire.
In spacelessness the whole of space will hold."

Prof. Umashankar Jashi

Editors's Comment

Many non-Muslim scholars and researchers have failed to acknowledge the fact that whatener may have been the saga of eatholicity and pacific attitudes of Sufi and Muslim Rishi faternity towards fellow human beings and other sub human creatures including birds, animals, plants, vegetation, flora and fauna and the Universal Environment, blessed as they were with Baseerat apart from Basarat, they have never deviated from the basic tenets and cardinal doctrines of Islam and have always strived to attain self realisation through total submission to Almighty Allah and that they have been ardent followers of the Holy Prophet (Peace be upon Him) in keeping steadfast to the observance of prayers and fasting in accordance with the Arabic postulate: SAAYIM-U-SALAT WA-DAAYIM-U-SAUM i.e. they regularly observe Nimaz and Saum which lead to piety. That being the reason why Nimaz has been ordained to be the Miraaj-ul-Moimineen.

No wonder, therefore, that Sheikh -ul-Alam, Hazrat Noor Din Noorani Walli Kashmiri, is called the KOSHUR WAIZ-I-QURAN whose song in praise of the Holy Book runs as under:-

QURAN PARAN KONO MUDUK
QURAN PARAN GIO NO SOOR
QURAN PARAN ZINDA KITHA RODUK
QURAN PARAN DOOD MANSUR
QURAN PARAN BEYGAM RODAKH
TAMATH PHORAY AKHIT TSUR

(Translation: While reading Quran,one should be ready to die or be done to dust afire with passion, how dare you continue to live while reading Quran, for did not Mansur became ashes on reading Quran., if one remains negligent during the reading of Quran,most surely he would be invinting satan to deviate him!)

See Rashid Nazki's article in
ALMDAAR (Urdu) edited by G.N. Gauhar P.65

There is also need to understand the different connotations of Rishi order and the community of Mazajeeb, latter category to which Lalla Aarifa belonged. Without this understanding we are apt to intermix a Sufi or a Sheikh with a Hermit-Majzub, like Mansur.

Hussyn bin Mausur Hallaj of Baghdad, is reported to have travelled from Iraq to Kashmir and held Manazarah (debates) with Baddhist and Brahman ascetics here some 1000 years ago. Mansur is known to have indulged in meditation for one full year without

break in Saum, save for ablutions, in front of Bab-i-Kaaba during his years of youth, but his life came to an end as an anti-climax of his mystic passion culminating in his martyrdom for transgression. My articles on Mansur's travel to Kashmir have been published in Baghdad observer (19-5-1984) and Jorden Times, Amman (21-10-1993).

As a last word, it may be added that while the whole truth remains untold about the tragedy that befell Charar-e-Sharief in April, 1995, the facts about the incident of arson and pillage at Hazratbal in 1990 have come to light, Readers are well advised to consult the Report of Inquiry conducted by an unbiased, non-official team comprising of Mr. Justice Mian Jalaluddin,Mr. Abdus Samad Khan, (Retd.IGP) and senior Advocate, Mr. G.N. Hagroo (all belonging to J&K Forum for Human Rights & Civil Liberties), of which this Editor has served as its Publicity Secretary). This Report is being published in a forthcoming publication of this Editor entitled "Kashmir Deadlock- keys to Unlock"

The decision of the University of Kashmir, announced in the first week of January, 1997, proposing to institute a Nund Reshi Chair in the University is to be welcomed. There is, however, a fly in the ointment, the announcement was brucketted with the announcement of instituting a Maulana Azad Chair simultaneously, perhaps motivated by political considerations and overlooking the ground realities or keeping in view the violent incidents that followed the decision to rechristen the Govt. Women Collage as Munlana Azad Memorial Woman College. Whether there will be any takers, is a matter to be watched and seen.

In contrast, the Nund Reshi Chair, however, is undoubtedly, to be a sure success, in view of the fact that this noble son of the sail is embedded in the hearts of Kashmiris, It must be acknowledged that Sheikh-ul-Alam, Shah Noor Din, is mentioned reverently in Friday Khutba in various mosques of Kashmir and his Khatmat-ul -Muazmaat are recited in sacrosanct Majalis of Reshi -Kubravi order. Nevertheless, non-Muslims continue to pay obeisance to the holy Saint with equal reverence and devotion.

Insha-Allah, the light emitting from the glowing lighthouse of Kashmir shall enlighten the humanity at large, breaking down walls, borders and distinctions.

1.1.97 *M. Amin Pandit.*

MESSAGE

Literature became a very effective vehicle in the hands of our mystic poets, sufis, saints and the like. While in the mundane sphere of politics, divisive tendencies and emotional violence created a state of turmoil, mystic poets blended the best in different faiths and preached the gospel of love, brotherhood and non- violence. They expelled the superficial differences between various faiths and identified the underlying unity of all religions.It was because of them that many dark hours in our history were illumined with hope and optimism. I believe that the lamp of unity shines because it gets its supply of oil from the springs of these noble souls.

Nanak, Meera, Kabir and Farid-ud-Din "Ganj Shakar" are the beacon lights which still shine with unfading glow and guide the destinies of millions.I consider Sheikh Noor-ud-Din Noorani in the same line of great mystic poets. He hailed before Nanak and Kabir but the essence of his message is very akin to them. He was not only a mystic saint but an originator of a mass movement. Rishi Cult, which he synthesised and originated in Kashmir was, infact, a harmonizing force which imbibed the best from the celebrated Trika Philosophy of Kashmir and Islam, which made its impact in Kashmir when the great Sheikh Noor-ud-din lived.

Sheikhul Aalm rejected the semblance and embraced the substance. The impact of his teachings was so profound that Islam also attained an indigenous cultural flavour in Kashmir, Islam, as is well known to every student of history, did not come to Kashmir under the shadow of sword. It won the hearts of local population by preaching the universal brotherhood and equality of human being.This spirit was reinforced and stablised by saints like Sheikh Noor-ud-din.He and his disciples conducted themselves with such dignity and nobility, that their instances inspired millions and popularised the faith they were preaching.His teachings led to a way of life which scorned scramble for wordly gains and petty favours and encouraged the spirit of sacrifice and selflessness.

We have the witness of Akbar's Prime Minister, Abul Fazal, and emperor Jehangir himself that the Rishis revolutionised the concept of service. They did abstain from pleasures and comforts of life but

they did not negate life. They devoted themselves to enrich the quality of life for common folk. The proportion of this movement can be imagined from Jehangir's statement that in his time when the population of Kashmir was considerably less, the number of such God-fearing Rishis was as large as two thousand. Sheikh Noor-ud-din also campaigned for communal unity and subsequent generations of Rishis strengthened his efforts. I have myself seen the response of Kashmiris to the terrible strain which the division of the sub continent put on the traditional way of life in Kashmir. When blizzards of hatred were invading this beautiful land from every side, the lamp of love which Sheikh Noor-ud-din had lighted refused to succumb. If my humble efforts to repulse the onslaught of these dark forces of hatred succeeded, I must, in all humility confess that it was because of the inspiration and blessings of such noble souls as Sheikh Noor-ud-din. It was a ray of the same lamp which was seen by the struggling Mahatma Gandhi when he exclaimed:

"I see a ray of light emitting from Kashmir".

There could hardly be a more eloquent tribute to Sheikh Noor-ud-din.

Sheikh Noor-ud-din deserves to get his place side by side with greatest benefactors and leading lights. We in Kashmir, celebrated his Hexa centenary celebrations and our researchers discovered new dimensions of his personality, sayings and influence. But it was rather a rude shock for us, when we suggested to the Union Ministry of Communications to issue commerative postal stamp in his honour, they replied that he is not known in India as widely as to justify such a gesture. Though the realization was painful, the Ministry had a point. It also highlighted how the bonds which could contribute to greater emotional and idealistic unity between various cultural constituents of India, have been allowed to remain dormant. On our part, we have initiated the process which could lead to greater appreciation of Sheikh Noor-ud-din's life and teachings. Jammu and Kashmir Academy of Art, Culture and Languages has published some special journals on him in Hindi, Urdu, Panjabi and the translations of his works in different languages are also under preparation. It was in the same spirit, that when it was suggested that we should host a seminar, I very gladly favoured the suggestion. I hope that deliberations of this Seminar will go a long way to put Hazrat Sheikh's personality and contribution on a

bigger and larger horizon. I do hope that an institution like Sahitya Akademi will divert its resourcefulness to make this job more easy and more expeditious, for a better understanding and appreciation of Kashmir, its ethos, its culture and its literature.

Oct. 1987

Sheikh Mohammad Abdullah
Chief Minister, J&K.

SELECTED BIBLIOGRAPHY

Ancient Geography of Kashmir (English)
M.A.Stein.
Asrar-i- Kasheer (Urdu)
Aziz Ahmad Qureshi
Ancient Moments of Kashmir (English)
Ram Chandra Kak.
Buddhist Kashmir (English
F.M.Hassnain.
Buddhism in Kashmir and Ladakh (English)
J.N.Ganhar and P.N.Ganhar.
Buddhists of Kashmir (English)
Jean Naudou.
Ragvad-gita (Sanskrit)
Birihan Nila Tantram (Sanskrit)
Bodha-Pancha-Desha (Sanskrit)
Devinam-Villas (Sanskrit)
Hindu Realism (English)
J.C.Chatterji
Hindu Kashmir (English)
F.M.Hassnain.
Hari-Har-Satotra (Sanskrit)
History of Kashmir (English)
P.N.K.Bamzai
History of Buddhism in Kashmir (English_
Sarla Khosla.
Heritage of Kashmir (English)
Edit. F.M.Hassnain.
Ishvara-pratyabhijna (Sanskrit)
Kashmirian Atherva-veda (English-Sanskrit)
Edit Barret.
Kashmir Shaivism (English)
Jagdish Chandra Chatterji.
Archaeological Monuments in Kashmir (English)
Anand Koul Bamzai.
Khazinat-ul-Asfiya (Urdu)
Ghulam Sarwar.
Kasheer (English)

G.M.D.Sufi
Loka-Prakasha (Sanskrit)
Laugakshi-Grhya-Sutra (Sanskrit)
Lallashari-Vakyani (Sanskrit)
Lalleshari-(English)
Anad Koul
Lalla Arifa (Urdu)
Mohamad Din Fauq.
Lalla Vakyani (English)
George Grierson and Barrett.
Ladakh-ki-Kahani (Urdu)
Mohammad Amin Pandit. (Also:Mukhtasir Tarikh -i-Kashmir-Urdu)
Ladakh the Moonland (English)
F.M.Hassnain, Masato Oki and Token Sumi
Mahayana Prakasha (Sanskrit)
Mallni-Vijaua-vartikam (Sanskrit)
Mregenda Tantram (Ssnskrit)
Majmooha-at-Tawarikh (Persian)
Birbal Kachru.
Mirat -us-Safa (Persian)
Mohamad Ali
Nile-Mata-Purana (English and Sanskrit)
Edit & Trans.Ved Ghai.
Noor-Nama (Kashmir)
Mohamad Amin Kamil.
Netra Tantram (Sanskrit)
Pratyabhijna Hrdeyam (Sanskrit)
Parmartha-Sara(Sanskrit)
Panchastavi (Sanskrit)
Roopa Bhavani (Hindi)
Shivnath Sharma.
Rajatarangini (English)
Trans.M.A.Stein.
Rajatarangini (Sanskrit-English)
Edit. Srikanth Koul
Shiv- Sutra-Vimarshini (Sanskrit)
Varada Raja.
Shive-Drishti(Sanskrit)
Shahname Kashmir (Persian)

Abdul Wagab.
Shms-Fair (Kashmir)
Svacchanda Tantram.(Sanskrit)
Shri Amareshwara Darshanam (Hindi)
Edit, Nile Kantha Gurtoo, Dina Nath Yaccha and Kashi Nath Handoo.
Suwanin Nayat-Roopa Bhawani (Urdu)
Rugh Nath Dhar.
Sufism in Kashmir (English)
A.Q.Rafiqi.
Shams -il-Arifeen (Urdu)
Ghulam Rasul Wani.
Salikan-i-Kashmir (Urdu)
Dilbar Kashmiri.
Tarikh-i-Aulie -i- Kashmir (Urdu)(Persian)
Hassan Shah Kuehami. Edit and Trans Mohamad Ibrahim.
Tarikh-i-Aqwami Kashmir (Urdu)
Mohamad Din Fauq.
Tarikh-i- Kashmir (Persian)
Hassan Shah Kuehami.
Tarikh-i- Kashmir (Persian)
Syed Ali
Tarikh-i- Kashmir (Persian)
Narayan Koul Aajiz.
Udamar-eshwarnantram (Sanskrit)
Vijnava Bhairava.(Saskirt)
Valley of Kashmir (English)
Walter Lawrence.
Waqia-i-Kashmir (Persian)
Mohamd Azam.
Words of Lala-The Prophetess(English)
R.C.Temple.

OUR CONTRIBUTORS

1. Mirza G.H. Beg Arif, eminent Kashmir poet and author..
2. Kh.G.H.Khan, retired Chief Engineer and author of "Kashmiri Mussalman"
3. Mufti Jalal-ud-din, (lete) Professor and Sadr Mufti,
4. Dr. T.N.Ganjoo, Professor of Hindi, University of Kashmir.
5. J. N. Gauhar (late) journalist - author.
6. J.L.K.Jalali-(late) Karmyogihnd and author.
7. Prof.K.N.Dhar, (late) Professor, Ex-Director, Parmanand Research Institute, Srinagar.
8. Haji Kh. Mohammad Amin Pandit, author, formerly Editor, "Kashmir Today".
9. Idrisa Pandit, formerly of the Univorsity of Kashmir.
10. Sheikh Manzoor Ahmed, Scholar.
11. Mr. Ishtiaq Fida -Research Scholar of the University of Kashmir.

LIST OF MEMBERS OF THE KASHMIR COUNCIL OF RESEARCH

(Registered under J&K Societies Act vide No 292 -5 of 1975 and recognized by J&K Academy of Art, culture Lauguages)

Dr. A.A Shah.
Dr. A.Q.Rafiqui.
Mr. A.H.Malik.
Mr. A.H.Burq.
Mr. B.L.Kak.
Mr. B.K.Challu.
Mr. F.A.Abba.
Mr. F.M.Hassnain (Vice Chairman).
Mr. G.N.Shah.
Mr. Ghulam Nabi.
Mr. G.H.Khan.
Mr. G.H.Beg Arif (Chairman).
Dr. Ghulam Nabi.
Dr. Miss Halim-ul-Nissa.
Mr. Ishtiaq Fida.
Mr. Isfindyar Khan.
Maulana Jala-ud-Din Mufti.
Mr. J.N.Azad.
Mr. J.N.Dhar.
Mr. Mohammad Amin Pandit (Hony. Secretary).
Mr. K.B.Warikoo.
Dr. (Mrs)Madhvi Yasin.
Mr. M.H.Maqdoomi .
Mr. M.A.Buch (Treasurer).
Dr. M.K.Teng.
Mr. Mohammad Yousuf Malik.
Mr. Neetar Nath Raina.
Dr. N.N.Raina.
Dr. R.K.Koul Bhat (Hony. Jt. Secretary).
Mrs. Santosh Koul.
Mrs. Santosh Bakaya.

Mr. S.S. Gergan. (Chairman I)
Mr. S.S. Charak.

Mr. S.K. Pattoo
Miss. Tasneem Bakshi
Dr. T.N. Ganjoo
Miss Vijay Pandita.
Mr. S. K.A. Qadri.
Mr. Shahid Badgami
Hakim Imtiaz Hussain
Mr. M. Ashraf.
Mr M. L. Suminatri
Mr. G. M. Dar.
Mr. G. Rubani
Mr. A. K. Rahbar.
Mrs. Tahira Qureshi
Mr. Shorida Kashmiri
Mr. M. Zaman Azurda.
S. Rajinder Singh Raina.
Mr. Z. A. Aga.

In the series of publications, Seminar Papers entitled "Cultural Heritage of Kashmir" edited by Mr. F.M. Hassnian has already been published by Gulshan Publishers, on behalf of the Council.

APPENDIX

APPENDIX

CONSTITUTION KASHMIR COUNCIL OF RESEARCH

Name

The name of the council shall be "Kashmir Council of Research".

Office Bearers and Executive:

The Council shall have a President, a Vice President, a Secretary, a Joint Secretary and a Treasurer. The Executive shall constitute of the office bearers and seven other members to be elected by the general body.

Headquarters

The council shall have its headquarters located at Srinagar. Aims and objects:

The aims and objects of the Council shall be:-

1) to serve as a forum of mutual discussion on matters of common interest to the researches.
2) to help and assist researchers in organising, fostering and conducting research into humanities and natural sciences pertaining to the art, history, literature, socio-economic life and culture of the people of J & K in particular and of the country as a whole and thereby aim at diffusion of knowledge to the best of its capabilities.
3) to orgainse lectures and seminars, symposia, and lectures from eminent scholars from time to time and arrange for their publication.
4) to keep liaison with the national and international research organisations for the promotion of aims and the objectives of the Council.
5) to keep liaison with the official and statutory bodies mentioned below:
   a) Central Ministry of Education and Culture.
   b) Sahitya Akademi
   c) Lalitkala Academy.
   d) Indian Historical Records Commission.
   e) Indian Council of Historical Research.
   f) India Council of World Affairs.
   g) State Ministry of Education J & K.
   h) J & K Academy of Art, Culture and languages.
   i) Directorate of Libraries, Research and Museums.

j) Directorate of Archives J & K.
k) Concerned Departments of kashmir/ Jammu University.
l) Indian Council for Cultural Relations.
m) Indian Council of Social Science Research.
n) Institute of Indology.
0) Bharatya Vidhya Bhavan and such other Institutes and Research Centers.

vi) to keep liaison with cultural and Research organisations in the State.

vii) to sponsor delegations of the members of the Council to other parts of the Country or abroad for studies.

Membership

Membership shall be open to all men of letters/ scholars who subscribe to the aims and objects of the Council. Membership fee shall be Rs 15/-annually payable by the end of March every year.

Periodicity of meetings:

The Council shall meet on the first working day of every month.

Fellows of the Council

The Council may admit any eminent scholar to the Fellowship of the council.

Finances

1) Apart from the membership fee, monies may be received by the Council as donation

2) All funds of the Council shall be deposited in the Jammu and Kashmir Bank Ltd; and shall be operated under the signatures of the President and the Treasurer.

Audit

The accounts of the Council shall be audited by agencies of audit provided for under the rules of registration.

Elections

Election of the Office bearers of the Council shall be held after every three years.

Amendment

The Constitution of the Council shall be amended by 2/3 majority of the total enrolled membership of the Council.

Removal

Any office bearer or member shall be removed by 2/3 majority of the executive.

Dissolution

The Council may dissolve itself by 3/4 majority of the total membership and the assets and liabilities shall devolve in any similar organization of State.

Board of Editors

The publications of the Council shall be edited by a Board of Editors to be appointed by the President.

Kashmir Council of Research policy Resolution on culture and Heritage of Kashmir

1. **Cultural Heritage**

The Kashmir Council of Research wish to underline the importance of the rich and great cultural heritage enshrined in the Vast source materials available in Kashmir for purposes of research and learning.

2. **Time to Act**

The Council is of a firm opinion that three decades having elapsed since independence, time has come when vigorous and concerted efforts should be undertaken now to delve deep into the treasures of art and culture of our State.

3. **Patronage of State Government**

The Council would therefore like to impress upon the State Government the necessity of provision of financial support, rewards and pensions to persons engaged in historical research, cultural activity, literary work and scientific exploration. Such financial support and rewards were forthcoming from imperial treasuries under royal patronage in pre-independence period. Now that popular regimes have emerged in post-independence era, it is in the fitness of things that such patronage should be forthcoming from the popular government.

4. Allocation of Funds

The Council appeals to the State Government to allocate specific funds for scientific research, cultural and historical studies and research without further loss of time, as we have to make up for a serious time-lag of about 30 years in this important field of development in art, history, culture and literature. Such a gesture on the part of the Government would be viewed by the Council with profound gratitude. Loyalty to the cause of honest endeavors to dig into our past culture and heritage with a vies to help build a bright, prosperous future- towards which we can look forward with a sense of pride and honour, should be our aim.

5. Microfilming of Manuscripts

The Council brings it to the notice of the Government that a vast store of old and rare manuscripts are scattered all over the State in custody of government, educational and other institutions as well as private individuals. These manuscripts constitute our precious heritage and national treasure, which require to be preserved on scientific lines. It is sad that up till now, no arrangements have been made for the microfilming and proper preservation. It may be recalled that it was in 1949 that Sheikh Mohammad Abdullah, then prime Minister of the State purchased a microfilming camera from France, Since then many Education Ministers have come and gone but no one has cared to get these manuscripts either microfilmed or photostated. The Council demands of the Ministry of Education to make necessary arrangements of staff and apparatus for the purchase and have the necessary microfilming etc. done promptly.

6. Return of manuscripts by National Archives, New Delhi

The Council notes with concern that our precious heritage in the shape of manuscripts in Sanskrit, Arabic and Persian and especially the world famous Gilgit manuscripts were sent to the National Archives, New Delhi, for repair and binding at the time of tribal raids, but these have not been returned so far. The Council demands that these manuscripts be got back and work restarted on the editing of the Gilgit manuscripts.

7. Department of Buddhism

It is reiterated that as the Mahayana Baddhism originated from

Greater Kashmir, there is need to start a research wing on Kashmir Buddhism at the University of Kashmir.

8. **Return of antiquities by the Archaeological Survey of India**

The Council understands that as per agreements entered by the State Government and the Government of India, the Archaeological Survey of India was to build an Anthropological Museum at Burzhama, which has not been done by them so far. All antiquities, which have been unearthed by the Archaeological Survey of India during the last 30 years have been taken away by them out of the State. The Council demands that the Archaeological Survey of India be requested to establish the promised Museum at Burzhama and return all the antiquities etc. unearthed during the last 30 years to our State Museums at Jammu, Srinagar and Leh.

9. **Encyclopedia Kashmiriana**

The Council records its appreciation of Jammu and Kashmir Academy of Art, Culture and Languages in having started the project of Encyclopedia Kashmir. The Academy, it is hoped, will enlist the cooperation of the Council in the compilation of this stupendous work to make it of such high standard and quality that should be sought after by scholars of Kashmiriology all over the world , including works on Shah Hamadan, Sheikhul Aalm and Sultan-ul- Aarfeen

10. **World Kashmir Conference**

The Council is of the opinion that in order to unravel and revitalise our culture, a grand conference be organised in Kashmir to which eminent personalities in different fields of Art, Culture and science pertaining to Kashmir are invited from different parts of the world. It would be in the fitness of things that this conference is held under non-official auspices, Such a Conference would more appropriately be part of the work of the Council and to make a beginning in this behalf and to hold first such conference, the State Government are requested to make a grant of Rs 50,000/- in favour of Kashmir Council of Research.

11. **Establishment of Department of Sanskrit**

It is well known that Kashmir formed an important seat of Sanskrit learning between 7th and 14th century. Contributions made

by Kashmiries to Sanskrit have attained world fame. It is regretted that up till now, no Department of Sanskrit has been established at the University of Kashmir. The Council demands of the University of Kashmir to establish the Sanskrit Department as early as possible.

12. **Establishment of Department of Arabic**

It is well known that since 13th century the Kashmirs have contributed a lot to the Arabic literature and such manuscripts are preserved in Archives, Research and other educational institutions as well as in private hands. It is also a fact that Arabic has attained much importance with the emergence of oil producing West Asian States. As such it is necessary to establish Arabic Department in the University of Kashmir who should take immediate steps to establish such a Department.

13. **Building of City Center and City Hall**

It is regretted that the Municipal Council, Srinagar has not yet built up a City Hall and a City Centre in Srinagar. The Council demands from the Municipal Council that it takes early steps to build such a City Centre and City Hall with necessary facilities and amenities.

14. **Pension to Scholars**

The Council and its members are committed to channalise their efforts and to devote their time to research and literary work. The Council is ready to help and assist the Ministry of Education of the State Government and the Jammu and Kashmir Academy of Art, Culture and Languages in framing a detailed scheme for grant of financial assistance and pension to prominent researchers engaged in research and study, in various fields of specialisation. The Council also suggests that Research Awards and Research Scholarships be instituted by the State Government on a regular basis.

15. **Grants of Research Organisations**

The Council urges upon the State Government to initiate action for grant of aid and financial support to various Research institutions and Research Centres in the State. In this connection mention may be made of Shri Parmanand Research Institute, Sharda

Peetha Research Centre, Research Centre of Hanfia Arabic College, Jamia Madiuatul Aloom etc.

16. **Centre of Central Asian Studies**

The Council notes with appreciation the establishment of the Centre for Central Asian Studies at the University of Kashmir. The Council would like to extend its full fledged cooperation and support to this Centre in the exploration of past history and culture of Kashmir, its impact and influences on the neighboring areas and vice versa.The Council however feels that all such research work, projects and conduct of literary studies should be got done through local authors and Research scholars who should have a controlling hand in such projects and studies. The Council demands that a Board of local scholars be constituted to formulate policies and give directions for carrying on various projects in the Centre of Central Asian Studies.

17. **Need for Field Scientific Research**

Departments of Botany, Chemistry, Zoology of the University of Kashmir be prevailed upon to undertake Field Scientific Research in flora, fauna, nines, minerals, forest wealth, medicinal plants, herbs, water and natural resources, solar energy, hydraulics etc., with a view to improve styles of life with these resources.

18. **Freedom m Fighters Memorial Hall**

The Council demands of the state Government to approve construction of a fire-proof building for housing vestiges of our historic past, Photographs of our martyrs and freedom fighters, all material available about them in manuscripts, from our printed records, tape recordings etc, for research by posterity. For this purpose, land-site as well as funds for construction, be made available for building of a Memorial Hall. The Council also requests the State Government to have the precious records available in the Reference and Research Library of the Department of Information Jammu and Kashmir Government, Srinagar fully utilized by research scholars for building an authentic history of freedom movement in Kashmir and the events in the State which followed the partition in 1947

19. **Editing and Publication of Manuscripts**

The Department of Archives may, in collaboration with the Cultural Academy make necessary arrangements of allotting to scholars projects for editing, annotation, compilation, translation of treasures of literature available in the State Archives at Jammu, Srinagar, and Bodhi-Leh in Persian, Sanskrit and Bodhi-Ladakhi. The State Cultural Academy may also take immediate steps to publish the manuscripts of Kashmir including Thufatul-Abrar and Baharistan-i-Shahi which are lying in Archives Library.

20. Research Material with Radio Kashmir, Leh, Jammu and Srinagar

Union Ministry of Information and Broadcasting of the Govt. of India be requested, with an appropriate recommendation from the State Government, to place at the disposal of Kashmir Council of Research copies of texts, transcripts and the tape recorded versions of talks, panel discussions and features etc. On art and culture of Kashmir broadcast from Srinagar, Ladakh and Jammu Stations of Radio Kashmir for purposes of printing the same in original or in translations for the benefit of the reading public.

21. Grant-in-aid to Lalded-Nundreshi Research Centre

The State Government, Ministry of Education, may agree to approach the National Commission for Co-operation with UNESCO to take up following major research projects in collaboration with Kashmir Council of Research, Archaeological Survey of India (North West Circle) and other interested international Agencies:

a. Megalithic and Neo-lithich period finds and excavations at Burzhama, Harwan and Horinar (Pahalgam) and similar other excavations of later periods.

b. Conducting search of hidden treasure of copper plates containing records of 4th Buddhist Council in Kashmir.

22. Institution of Chair in Ladakhi

The University of Kashmir may agree to institute a Chair for Research in Ladakhi art, culture and literature with necessary financial assistance from the University Grants Commission.

23. Task Force for implementation of policy Resolution

The Council recommends that a Task Force for implementation of this policy Resolution on research and cultural heritage, be

constituted under the Chairmanship of the Chief Minister in which the Kashmir Council for Research should be suitably represented.

24. In pursuance of the above, the council requests the Chief Minister J & K to use his good offices with the Ministry of Education, Government of India, Departments of the State Government and the University of Kashmir, Municipal Council and Cultural Academy for considering the suggestions set forth above.

The above policy Resolution was framed by a Sub-Committee of the Kashmir Council of Research, comprising the following members:

1. Mr. Mohammed Amin Pandit (Convener)
2. Pandit J.N. Ganhar
3. Mr. M.A. Buch
4. Dr. R.K. Koul Bhatt.
5. Mr. A.H. Malik
6. Mr. F.M. Hassnain

The above policy Resolution was later on, unanimously adopted by the General Body of the Council.

KASHMIR COUNCIL OF RESEARCH OFFICE BEARERS (1981-84)

Registered under J & K Societies Act No.292-s of 1975. Recognised by J & K Academy of Art, Culture and Languages.

Patron:	Chief Minister
President	Mirza G.H. Beg Arif.
Vice-President	Dr. T.N. Ganju
Secretary	Mr. M.A. Pandit
Joint Secretary	Mr. Abdul Hamid Malik
Publicity Secretary	Mr. M. Amin Buch

Editor	Mr. Neetar Nath Raina
Editor	Mr. Ishtiaq Fida.
Address for general correspondence:	Mr. M. Amin Pandit. Hony. Secretary, Kashmir Council of Research, Srinagar-191121

Kashmir Council of Research
4th Annual Function- Lal Mandi- Srinagar,

August 27,1979
Address of welcome by the President of the Council:

Chairman, distinguished guests and friends:

First, let me on behalf of the council extend a very warm welcome to the patron of this Council and to all our distinguished guests here this evening. It is splendid to have so many of you with us.

Ladies and Gentlemen, it is nearly two years since, Sheikh Sahib released seven books written by the members of this Council. Encouraged by this great interest in the Council, the members have produced four more books, which he will be requested to release today.

Now about our Journal, it is the most important medium which we have for pursuing the aims of this society, Sheikh Sahib will be requested to release a Special Number of the Studies of kashmir Council of Research on "Struggle for Freedom in Jammu and Kashmir".

On 5th December, 1977 Dr. Ghulam Hassan Khan and one of our founding members put a resolution before the Council proposing to publish a Special Number of the Studies on the Martyrs of 13th July, 1931.

Dr. m.K. Teng, the then Editor of the series was asked by the Executive body to find eminent contributors from different walks of life to project on the freedom fighters, so as to have a completer picture of the struggle for political and economic emancipation of the people of Jammu and Kashmir.

The Council intends to continue to research and publish the series, provided we have the funds and facilities.

Due to lack of funds the council was not able to publish research papers read by the members during the last two years. Details of these papers shall be reported by the secretary.

On 21st November, 1977, at our annual function , Sheikh Sahib was pleased to ask Mr. Sonam Nurbo to allot a suitable building and a plot a land for the Council. Mr. Sonam Narbo, after consultation with other authorities was pleased to allot a building and plot under the occupation of M/S Johanson and Co., situated behind the College of Education. For more than one year the members followed the papers, at last the Council was informed by the Vice- Chairman, Srinagar Development Authority- quote "notwithstanding the fact that we have recommended the lease of this piece of land to Kashmir Council of Research ....was transferred in favour of Shree Haji Mohammad Ramzan Mata-Hanji."

As for the choice for the venue of today's meeting I have to say with humility that:

1. We are the same Khana-Badosh as were in 1977

2. One of the members of this Council and his young colleagues led by Mr. M.H. Makhdoomi, Curator SPS museum were fortunate to discover a very ancient archaeological find in the highland of the Lidder Valley. The tiles discovered have unique figures very similar to the ancient , middle-east riverian civilization, which are displayed in this hall.

I apologise all the guests, especially Jenab Sheikh Sahib for talking so much about our domestic troubles.

Today at the 4th Annual Function, I feel proud and privilege to present before you, a brief report on the working and achievements of Kashmir Council of Research.

The Kashmir Council of Research was established in December, 1975, due to the efforts of some like minded scholars of the State. Due to these efforts of its founding members and their love for research the organisation has progressed. In 1976 at our First Annual Function held at S,P. College on 15th of June, we made our public appearance when the Hon'ble Chief Minister (who is also Patron of our Council) released a book in Tibetan written by our President, Mr. S.S. Gergan. Also a book in manuscript on 'Article 370 of the Constitution of India' written by one of our council

members, Mr. Ghulam Nabi Wani was also presented to Hon'ble Chief Minister for favour of writing a foreword.

In October, 1976 we held a 3-day Seminar in S.P. College, Srinagar on the subject of 'Cultural and scientific Heritage of Kashmir and Ladakh'. The Seminar was presided in its sittings by Dr. R.K. Parimoo, and Dr. Z.U. Ahmed. The nine papers read at this Seminar were:

S.No.	*Subject*	*Speaker*
1.	Rishi Cult in Kashmir	Prof. K.N. Dhar
2.	Composite Culture of Kashmir	Prof. F.M. Husnain
3.	Iqbal and kashmir	Shri J.N. Asad
4.	Cultural Heritage of Kargil	Kachu Isfandyar Khan
5.	Discovery and Development of Tussar in J & K	Mirza G.H. Beg Arif.
6.	Race movement in J & K	Dr. M.K. Teng
7.	Cultural Heritage of Ladakh	Mr. S.S. Gergan
8.	Political Philosophy of Mahjoor's poetry.	Miss Tasneem Bakshi
9.	Practice of Gynaenocracy in Kashmir	Dr. Miss Halim-u-Nissa.

In furtherance of the aims and objective of the council, assistance was rendered to researchers and scholars of the State who tried to secure post-Graduate and post-Doctorate Scholarships and Research Awards sponsored by the British Council and USEFI, New Delhi. In this connection , a number of applications from desirous members were forwarded in November, 1976, to the Foreign Scholarship Section of the Union Ministry of Education and Social Welfare.

The Council also tried to establish contact with the Indo-Iran Society and the House of Soviet Culture and the Mission of Arab states, New Delhi with a view to delve into the past memorable cultural relations between Kashmir and central Asian territories, Iran and the Arab World. The Council is also in communication with the Authors' Guild of India and the National book Trust.

The Council proposes to take up the question of seeking assistance from I.C.H.R., I.C.S.R. and UNESCO for research into our antiquity and promotion of field sciences.

In our second Annual Function held at the Nedous Hotel, Srinagar, in November, 1977, the following books by our members were released by our patron Chief Minister, in addition to the latest series of Studies of Kashmir council of Research:

1. Francke's History of Ladakh with critical introduction and annotation by Mr. S.S. Gergan and Prof. F.M. Husnain.
2. Constitutional History and Documents by Dr. M.K. Teng, Dr. R.K. Kaul Bhat and Miss Santosh Kaul.
3. Hindu Kashmir, by Prof., F.M. Husnain.
4. The Fall of Gilgit, by Mr. B.L. Kak.
5. Bibliography of J & K, Compiled by Mr. K.B. Warikoo.
6. Iqbal in the Eyes of Western philosophers, (in Urdu) by Shri J.N. Azad.
7. One Thousand proverbs and sayings of Ladakh, Spiti, Lahul and Western Tibet, by Rev. Gergan.

In our third Annual Function in 1978 a seminar on Alamdar-i-Kashmir was held in the Teachers college, Srinagar. The Seminar was presided over by Justice Mian Jalal-ud-Din, Chief Justice, High Court of Jammu and Kashmir. Research papers were read by following members:

1. Mufti Jalal-ud-Din
2. Prof. K.N. Dhar
3. Kh. Ghulam Hassan Khan, Ex-Chief Engineer.
4. Shri J.N. Ganhar.
5. Mirza Arif.
6. Dr. T.N. Ganju.
7. Mr. M. Amin Pandit.

These papers have since been edited by a Board of Editors and are being published shortly under the auspices of the Council.

We have been meeting regularly every month. In these meetings various research papers on different subjects of art, culture, history and sciences are read out by the members of our Council.

Here I may admit, Sir, that our progress has been slow, but I am proud that it has been continuous, purpose-ful and effective, irrespective of our financial difficulties which every time stand in our way. Frankly speaking this our effort of having a research body is at the cost of our personal and that of our families' financial cuts. We never, Sir asked for financial assistance to our individual members though Government could help by making bulk purchasing of the books of our council members but what we ask is a shelter over our heads as promised by the Chief Minister in our second Annual Function in 1977.

Today we have again come before you with four Valuable books by our members and Vol.III of our Series of Studies of Kashmir Council of Research, a special number was scheduled to be released on Martyrs Day last year but, for our limitation of finances, it got delayed by one year. We are happy that this prize publication of ours has seen the light of the day. Our special thanks are due to our contributors especially non-members who spared their valuable time to write for us without any remuneration.

It may not be out of place to mention here that our members are really working under hard and odd circumstances.

The following works are under preparation:

1. Biography of Sher-i-Kashmir by Prof. F.M. Husnain.
2. 2nd and 3rd Volume of Freedom Struggle in Jammu and Kashmir by Dr. M.K. Teng, Dr. R.K. Kaul Bhatt and Mrs. Santosh Koul.
3. Indigenous inhabitants of Indus Valley (Greater Ladakh) by S.S. Gergan.
4. Cultural Anthropology of Kashmir by Dr. T.N. Ganjoo.
5. Development of Persian poetry in Kashmir during Mughal, Pathan, Sikh and early Dogra Rule by Mr. M.Amin Buch
6. Social and Cultural History of India by Prof. F.M. Husnain, Dr. T.N. Ganjoo and Dr. R.K. Kaul.

Further, the following works by our members are in the press:

1. History of Kashgar-Central Asia by Prof. F.M. Husnain, Shri S.S. Gergan and Prof. Tokan Sumi.
2. Social, Cultural and Religious Life in Ladakh by Prof. F.M. Husnain and Prof. T. Muirs.
3. History of Constitutional Development in J & K State (1846-1965) by Dr. R.K. Kaul Bhat.
4. Documents of freedom Struggle in J & K State Vol. I by DR. M.K. Teng, Dr. R.K. Koul Bhat. and Mrs. Santosh Koul.
5. Government and politics in J & K State by Dr. M.K. Teng, Dr. R.K. Koul Bhat and Mrs. Santosh Koul.
6. Freedom Struggle in Kashmir (1931-1939) by Dr. Ghulam Hassan Khan of the University of Kashmir.
7. Evolution of Kashmiri language by Dr. T.N. Ganjoo.

One of the members of this Council, professor Jagan Nath Azad of Jammu University, has during the last two years written four works on Iqbal -the great poet of kashmir. These books won awards from the State Government of U.P., Bihar, Punjab and Jammu and Kashmir. He participated in Iqbal centenary Celebrations in different parts of the country and abroad. In Pakistan he was hailed as a great scholar on Iqbal.

Another member of the council, Prof. F.M. Husnain, who is a visiting professor of a few Universities in Japan, went for lecture tours abroad.

Other two members of the Council Dr. R.K. Koul Bhatt and Dr. T.N. Ganjoo attended Xth International congress on Anthropological and Ethnological sciences held at New Delhi in December, 1978.

The following works by our members are to be released by our patron:

1. Series of Studies of Kashmir council of Research Vol. III (Special number on freedom Struggle in Kashmir)
2. Gilgit-The Northern Gate of India by Mr. F.M. Husnain.
3. Indian Administration by Dr. Madhvi Yasin.
4. Wild Life of Ladakh by Mr. J.N. Ganhar.
5. Himalayan States by Mr. S.S Charak.

At the end I leave it to you, Sir, to Judge our work and the results of our endeavors. But I may admit it , Sir, that Original Research is not a matter of days and months but of years and ages and is simply impossible without adequate official patronage which we hope shall be forthcoming in abundance.

The following issues are brought to the kind notice our patron:

1. Extra-ordinary special grant of Rs 3, 277/- by the government to tide over our financial liabilities,
2. Special grant of Rs, 5,000/- for publication of "Cultural Heritage of Kashmir and Nund Reshi Symposium papers.
3. Allotment of accommodation for holding meetings and housing the office of the council and the Lal-Ded Nund Reshi library.

Secretary,
Kashmir council of Research.
27-8-1979.

RELEASE OF BOOKS ON 5TH DECEMBER. 1980

ADDRESS

The Kashmir council of research is an academic body, which seeks to achieve the following objectives:

a. to promote and foster researches in the art, history and culture of the people;

b. to organise meetings and seminars; and

c. to establish and maintain liaison with national research organisations.

The Council is a non- political, non-partisan and non-governmental organisation and is open to all men of letters and scholars. A significant motivation, which underlines the functions of the Council, is the necessity to organise research in the art, culture and history of the people of Jammu and kashmir. The council publishes its research investigations in a magazine: Studies of the Council. Various publications compiled by its members are released every year on the occasion of annual functions. The following books are being formally released by the patron of the Council, Janab Sheikh Mohammed Abdullah, Chief Minister, Jammu and Kashmir, today the 5th December, 1980.

1. FREEDOM MOVEMENT IN KASHMIR : Dr. G.H. Khan, Kashmir University.
2. PROFILE OF ABDULLAH : Mr F.A. Abba.
3. HERITAGE OF KASHMIR :Mr. F.M. Hassnain. Retired Director of Archives, Libraries and Museums.

FREEDOM MOVEMENT IN KASHMIR; Dr. G.H. Khan, political science department, University of Kashmir, is an in-depth study of the first phase of the freedom movement (1931-40) in Kashmir. The author has succeeded in establishing the non-communal character of the mass-movement started by the Muslim Conference, from 1931 to 1939. The political objective of the movement was to secure for all, living in the State, their freedom social, political and economic. The author has concentrated on the general economic and political conditions of the people, and various other forces, which were directly or indirectly involved in the freedom struggle. The author has made use of original material land presented it in its proper context. He has studied earlier socio-religious reform movements in Kashmir and their effect on preparing the ground for a mass movement. In his Foreword to the book, Janab, Sheikh

Mohamad Abdullah has remarked:

"I wish other scholars in the field to continue the work of study into various facets of our freedom struggle on the lines suggested by Prof. Khan."

PROFILE OF ABDULLAH by Nr. F.A. Abba deals with important events in the life of Jenab Sheikh Mohamad Abdullah, right from his birth to the present times. The author deals with the formative years in the life of Sheikh Sahib, his plunging into the freedom struggle in 1931 and emergence as the born leader of the people against the autocratic rule of the Dogra Maharajas. In this biographical study, the author has used both original and secondary sources. He has obtained reliable information from personal interviews of those, who are connected with our freedom struggle. The book describes the conditions and situations in which Jenab Sheikh Sahib grew from boy Abdullah to Bub-Father of the kashmir.

HERITAGE OF KASHMIR, edit. by Prof. F.M. Hassnain, contains papers read at the Seminar held in Srinagar in 1976, on "Cultural Heritage of Kashmir"; under the auspices of the Kashmir Council of Research. The papers selected for this volume are original studies, both in their orientation as well as interpretation. It is hoped that it will provide rich and helpful source-material for further research into the history and culture of Kashmir. The volume has been published by M/S Gulshan publishers, Srinagar, Kashmir, who are the official publishers of the Council. Foremost scholars like Prof. Dr. Tokan Sumi, J.L.K. Jalali, Dr. T.N. Ganjoo, Dr. S.G. Nabi, Dr. A.Q. Rafique, Miss Tasneem Bakshi, Dr. Koul, Mr. S.S. Gergan, Kachoo Isfandyar Khan, Prof. A.H. Malik, Mirza G.H. Arif Beg, Dr. Miss Halim-u-Nisa, Dr. A.A. Shaw have contributed their papers on various aspects of our history and culture.

The Kashmir Council of Research proposes to publish collection of papers on Sheikh-ul-Aalam, Sheikh Noor-ud-Din Noorani, in near future. In a policy Resolution, the Council has underlined the importance and need to preserve our rich and great cultural heritage, for purposes of research and learning.

M.A. Pandit
Secretary Kashmir Council of Research.

CORRESPONDENCE

28 Dec 1996

My dear Pandit Sahib,

I have Just received a copy of your book on 'Festivals of Kashmir' which will be a useful addition to my library. The rich spiritual heritage of the Valley embracing Hindu, Muslim, Sikh and Christian shrines is indeed unique.

I Warmly reciprocate your New Year greetings,

Yours sincerely,
Karan Singh

Haji M. Amin Pandit
Srinagar

22-1-1997

Jenab Dr. Sahib,

With due respects, I seek your good offices with the INCC with UNESCO (HRD Ministry) for procurement, on payment if required, of a copy of UNESCO guidelines, norms or procedures governing preservation, acquisition, utilisation and eventual publication of archival material, including are manuscripts etc

I write this is convection with the newsreport that the State Govt. of J & K have constituted a committee, with Shri B.P. Sharma as its chairman(with the status of a Dy. Minister) and Mr. M.Y. Teing, Mr. Noor Mohammad, Prof; M.L Kapur and Dr. Ved Kumari Ghai as its members, with a view to recommend measures for preservation of archival material in the State.

We, here in Kashmir would like to be equipped with the UNESCO guidelines or policy decisions or regulations of HRD Ministry for our guidance, if not classified.

I hope and trust, it would be possible for you to consider issuing a supportive chit to INCC (HARD Ministry) to my request above

Your Sincerely
(M. A. Pandit)

Dr. Karan Singhji,
New Delhi.

31-1-97

Dear Sharma Sahib,

Your letter dt. 19-1-97 in haeed. Thanks for the same as also the pren clipping you have been nice to pan on to me. I has received it from some other source also.

2. Kashmir (I mean J & K) will not be same as it used to be. The book was written some 20 years lack when Dr. Riziul Hussan Chisti was the V.C. of U.O.K. (then Kash: Uni) encompassing entire J & K. However I added some footnotes in late 1996. The old J & K state is dead, as rightly observed by Shri Om Saraf in one of his letters to me, thanks to the Security Forces, the alienation is total and complete. Temptations of fishes and loaves will prove to be an aberration , a matter of time alone, Who knows, we may propose, God may dispose.

3. I have already written to you with reg. to your new committee. Its purview is restricted to the function of advising for preservation. It does not cover acquisition and utilization. Perhaps you may have to apply your mind to it.

And migrant members can be of little help.

Yours Sincerely
Mohammad Amin Pandit

Shri B. P. Sharma,
Jammu.

31 January 1997

My dear Pandit Sahib,

Thank you for your letter of 11th January. As you know, my wife and I also offered a velvet chadar at the sacred shrine of Charar-e-Sharif soon after it was destroyed by fire.

I have also received your interesting book on Festivals of Kashmir, and look forward to seeing your book on Charar-e-Sharief when it is printed. I am also asking Sardar Teja Singh to Keep in touch with you.

With good Wishes,

Yours sincerely
(Karan Singh)

Shri M.Amin Pandit
Near Water Works Nishat
Srinagar-191121.

18-1-1997

Mv Dear Haji Sahib,

I hope you might have already seen my review of your book. "Festivals of Kashmir," which appeared today in the Kashmir Times.

But to be on the safe side I am enclosing a cutting of the same.

I hope you have already read about my appointment as Chairman of Committee to suggest ways and means to preserve our cultural heritage in the State Archives Repositaries. I have been given the status of a Deputy Minister.

As some details of this scheme are still to be worked out, I will be informing you in detail later on.

With regard

Your sincerely,
(B. P. Sharma)

Mr. M. Amin Pandit,
Nishat - Srinagar.

SECULAR TRADITIONS OF THE VALLEY

The 'Kashmir Times', Jammu 19th January 1997: The New year has brought me a gift from an old colleague, Haji Mohammad Amin Pandit, of his beautifully printed book "Festivals of Kashmir". I did not believe that a Srinagar based publisher could produce such a quality laser typeset book. Even the tri- colour cover of the book is so beautifully arranged that it speaks volumes about the synthetic culture of Kashmir.

The central topic of the book, according to Mr. R. H. Chishti, Vice- Chancellor of the University of Kashmir, who has written the "Foreword", is the Happy Valley, though Ladakh and Jammu have also been covered by the author. Many political, social, religious and cultural currents emanating from various sources, both inside and outside the Valley, have came into contact, mixed, clashed compromised with one another over the centuries. In the process a peculiar kind of synthetic culture has come into being especially in the social and cultural fields, not so in the religious and political domains. But there is evidence of tolerance of one another's opinions, and feelings which is not found in that degree elsewhere in the country."

Haji M. Amin Pandit has divided his book in 15 chapters which include: Kashmir's Cultural Heritage; Kashmir as a confluence of religions and culture; two chapters on the Festivals of Kashmir; two on Music of Kashmir. The Hazratbal Shrine and the Amarnath Pilgrimage from two separate chapters. Fairs and Festivals of Ladakh and Jammu dealt with in two separate chapters.

In his Chapter captioned "Advent of Spring" the author quotes extracts from my two letters addressed to him without the least knowledge that he was writing a book of this type. I had only recaptulated my childhood memories of the advent of spring after the end of winter when snow- fall is considered an auspicious omen and people greet their friends by sending them greetings which read:" Barfnauuftad, SadMubarakbad".

In my letter dated 5th January, 1996, I wrote: "I recall my childhood when we used to divide ourselves (in two parties) and play Sheen Jang. We used to erect huge images of snow."

In my letter dated 10th March 1996, I wrote: "With the approach of spring season, I recall the almond blossom around the Badamwari at Hari Parbat where we used to go with Samawars and enjoy Kahva and Kulchas. The hot Pakodas made of Nadrus cannot be forgotten. Petals of almond flowers falling on the ground presented a scene so beautiful that I wish to see the same again. Would it be possible? Or is only a dream?"

In the chapters on "Cultural Heritage" and "Kashmir Confluence of Religion and Culture" the author has ably portrayed the real spirit of Kashmir and the Kashmir- the greatness of their tradition, tolerance and hospitality which has been preserved in pristine glory in Kashmir.

Kashmir presents a happy blending of the best in Hindu, Muslim, Buddhist and other cultures. The cultural links with India, according to the author, "are 2,500 years old. Kashmir derives its name from saint Kashyap and legend has it that Lord Buddha visited the Valley before he attained enlightenment".

The author further asserts that the people of Kashmir "are truly secular in that the followers of one faith venerate the saints of other faiths. In a sense they own all the prophets and religious leaders."

In his "Short Note on the author " which forms the concludeing chapter of the book, Haji M. Amin Pandit has made two glaring his historical mistakes. On page 114 he says "Yuvraj Karan Singh was born in 1929 A.D." The correct date of his birth is 9th March, 1931.

Similarly he assigns the year 1948 as the year of the "exit of Maharaja Hari Singh from the State." Actually Maharaja Hari Singh signed the proclamation etrusting Yuvraj Karan Singh with powers and functions with regard to the Government on 20th June, 1949. However, he continued to remain the Maharaja and issued directions to the Yuvraj to act or not on the proposals submitted by Sheikh Abdullah, as Prime Minister. He ceased to be the Maharaja only when the State Constituent Assembly passed its historic resolution ending the hereditarv rule in the State on 20th August, 1952.

B. P. Sharma.

6, March, 1996

Hony. Secretary,
Indian Red Cross, J&K Branch,
Srinagar.

Subject: Relief to fire-sufferers of Charar.

Sir,

It was a matter of satisfaction to learn about the visit of Shri M. L. Koul IAS, Additional Chief Secretary (Financial Commissioner) to Charar-e-Sharief on 5-3-96, accompanied by the Divisional Commissioner, Kashmir Shri S.S. Kapoor, who were told on spot that a sum of 15.5 crores rupees have been distributed among the victims there as ex-gratia relief. (Refer AIR news-bulletin 6-3-96).

But, let me assure you that these glad tidings are no substitute to a personal visit of the non-official members of the Red Cross Society, as was proposed by me as early as on 23-8-1995, which reminders on 3-7-95, 4-11-95, 8-12-95, 15-12-95.

On the non-official level respected Dr. Karan Singhji paid a visit to Charar-e-Sharief. He expressed his concern in his public statement and his letter dated 20 Nov, 1995 addressed to me. exact copy whereof I forwarded to you vide my letter dt 15-12-95 to your address.

I still hope and expect to the Chairman, District Budgam Red Cross Committee (Deputy Commissioner) to please convey a meeting on spot, to which we non-official members may also be invited with a view to cross check the statement of relief articles provided by the Red cross J&K to the Dy. Commissioner, Budgam for the fire-sufferers of Charar-e-Sharief, as contained in your No. RC/BCM/8/476-503 dt 25-8-95 and other related matters.

Thanking you,

Yours sincerely,
M.A. Pandit
Copy to:-
1. Dr. Karan Singhji, New Delhi.
2. Shri M.L. Koul, Financial Commissioner, J&K, Jammu.

12 April 1996

Hony. Secretary,
Indian Red Cross, J&K Branch,
Srinagar.

Subject: Relief to fire-sufferers of Charar-e-Sharief.

Sir,

Continuation my reminder dated 6 March, 96 to your address on the subject cited above.

The deputy commissioner, Budgam may kindly be requested to convene a meeting, as suggested.

In the alternative, the Vice-Chairman, Red Cross, State Branch(Hon'ble Advisor I/C Health) may be requested to please take up a meeting with the District Budgam Red Cross Committee at a convenient date, to which we the non-official members may also be invited.

Thanking you,

Yours sincerely,
M.A. Pandit

Copy to:

P.S. to Hon'ble Advisor, Health, J&K Govt., Jammu along with copy of my letter dt 6-3-96.

2-5-96

Mr. Mohd Amin Pandit
Member Kashmir Regional Red Cross Committee
Srinagar

Subject: Relief to fire-sufferers of Charar-e-Sharief.

Dear Sir,

I have already taken up the matter with the Divisional Commissioner Kashmir and his reply in the matter is still awaited.

Yours faithfully

S.K. Koul
Hony. Secretary
Red Cross State Branch
Srinagar.

8 June, 1996

Hony. Secretary,
Indian Red Cross, J&K Branch,
Srinagar.

Subject: Relief to fire-sufferers of Charar-e-Sharief.

Reference: Your No. RC/DBS/57/119 dt 2-5-96 (recd on 7-6-96)

Sir,

I am delighted to learn that you have "Already taken up the matter with the Divisional Commissioner, Kashmir and his reply is still awaited".

Since last one year, I have been impressing upon your good self the need to convene an on-the-spot meeting of the District Budgam Red Cross to review Action Taken Reports.

In case such a meeting is not convened within next one month, may I presume that you will have no objection in our paying a visit there, on our own.

Besides. I propose to request Dr. Karan Singhji to kindly consider paying another visit to Charar-e-Sharief this summer, before the onset of next winter.

Thanking You,

Yours sincerely
M. Amin Pandit

Copy to:
P.S. to Dr. Karan Singhji,
New Delhi-21

21 June, 1996

Honry. Secretary,
Indian Red cross J&K Branch,
Srinagar.

Subject: Relief to victims of Charar-e-Sharief.

Ref: i) Sub-item(C) of Supplementary Agenda No. 4 - Minutes of Meeting held at Jammu on 27-2-96 circulated vide no RC/C/8/96/101-50 dt 18-6-96.

ii) BC/DBS/57/119 dt 2-5-96 whereby the case stands referred to Div. Comm. (K) and my reply dt 8.6.96.

Sir,

Once again, I humbly request that a meeting of District Budgam Red Cross Committee, including NGO members be convened to review Action Taken Reports.

Dy. Commissioner, Budgam (Chairman, Budgam Red Cross) may be requested to circulate background note quite in advance.

Thanking you,

Yours sincerely,

M. Amin Pandit
Member, State Branch.

Copy to:
1. P.S. to Hon'ble Advisor (Health).
2. Div. Com. Kashmir.

26-6-96

Mr. M. A. Pandit
J&K Member Red Cross
R/o Brain Nishat,

Subject: Relief to victims of Charar-e-Sharief.

Ref: His letter dated 21/6/96.

Dear Sir,

As already intimated to you vide this office No. RC/DBS/57/119 dt 2/5/96 the case has already been referred to the Divisional Commissioner (Chairman Kashmir Regional Red Cross Committee) for advice.

As soon as I get the reply from his end I shall revert back on the subject with you.

Yours Faithfully,

S.K. Koul
Hony. Secretary J&K
Red cross State Branch
Srinagar.

15 Oct. 1996

Respected Dr. Sahib,

The day your good self paid a visit to Charar-e-Sharief, you had kindly informed me about it and had advised me to watch out the press reports for which I am highly indebted to you, Sir.

Since 3-7-95, in my capacity a NGO member of the State Managing Committee of Indian Red Cross, J&K Branch, I have, vide half a dozen letters, begged the Hony. Secretary J&K Red Cross to very kindly arrange for an on spot meeting of the Dist. Budgam Red Cross Committee at Charar-e-Sharief with a view to ensure transparency in relief works.

Vide his replies dated 2-5-96 and 26-6-96, he has kindly intimated that the plea has been forwarded to the Div. Com. (K) (Chairman, Kashmir Regional Red Cross Committee) for the advice and that he would revert back to me as soon as he gets a reply.

I have not heard from him further.

I venture to humbly propose again that your good self may condescend to pay a repeat visit to the Holy Shrine and listen to the victims there. It would be my good fortune Dr. Karan Singhji, if you agree to my accompanying you on this visit. Shri S. K. Koul, Hony. Secy. Red Cross J&K may also be given prior intimation, if approved.

Yours sincerely,
M. A. Pandit

Dr. Karan Singhji,
New Delhi.
Copy to :-
Shri S. K. Koul.

23 October 1996

My Dear Haji Sahab,

I have your letter 15 October. Now that an elected government is in position, I suggest you that you might take this matter providing relief to fire-sufferers and other victims of Charar-e-Sharief up with Dr. Farooq Abdullah. I am not planning another visit to the valley in the near future, but will be glad to keep in touch.

With good wishes,

Yours Sincerely,
(Karan Singh)

Haji M. Amin Pandit
Srinagar 191 121

13-11-96

Div. Comm. (K)
Srinagar.

Sub: Relief to victims of Charar-e-Sharief.

Sir,

Barely two hours after our Red Cross Regional Committee meeting on 12 Nov, 96, under your Chairmanship, 14 hours News Bulletin reported that ICRC teams were engaged in survey work & rehabilitation of the infrastructure in cyclone hit Andhra Pradesh. If Andhra Pradesh State Govt. could seek aid and assistance from ICRC, World Bank, and other international NGOS, why can't we do it here in accordance with the aim & object contained in the Constitution of Indian Red Cross Society, Jammu & Kashmir State Branch, we are to blame ourselves, if we have failed to seek such help so far. A cutting from UN newspaper 26 Oct, 1996 is attached which perhaps may prove helpful. May I, therefore humbly request you to please consider taking up the matter appropriately as follows:

i) The ministry of Relief & Rehabilitation be requested to consider the plea contained in the resolution adopted unanimously in our meeting for seeking aid & assistance in a massive scale for relief work in Kashmir,

ii.) The State Govt. be requested to allow representation of Kashmir Red Cross in the Rehabilitation Council (Copy of Letter h/w)

iii) Advice the Dy. Comm Budgam (Chairman, Distt. Budgam Red Cross) to convene an on-the-spot meeting at Charar-e-Sharief in pursuance of the reply I have received from Dr. Karan Singhji. (Copy h/w)

Thanking You,

Yours Sincerely
M.A. Pandit.

21-11-1996
No : Rehi/ 1300/95

Shri M. Amin Pandit,
Near Water Works Nishat,
Srinagar.

Subject: Relief to victims of Charar-e-Sharief.

Sir, Please discuss the issue with me raised by you on a prefixed date. This refers to your letter of 13th Nov. 96.

Yours Faithfully,

S.L. Bhat
Divisional Commissioner
Kashmir.

20 Jan, 1997

My dear Sharma Sahib,

From KASHMIT GAZETTE (1-1-97) I have learnt about your new assignment as Chairman of newly constituted Committee to recommend steps to preserve precious archival material in J&K.

While this is a matter for felicitation, let me dare tell you this is also a reconable challenge. Also, it is to be noted that all segments and constituencies like the Muslim Ulema, Ladakhi Lamas Shrine Repositories, Braham scholars etc have failed to get representation on the Committee; indeed unfortunate. Mr. late S.S. Gergan, Ex-President of our Council of Research would usually give vent to this grievance.

The Regional Records Survey Committee, of which I was once nominated as a member, did little in this direction, which is sad no doubt. The basic question is to create confidence, especially when the intellectuals are totally alienate. Another question to be addressed is not only of preservation but of acquisition and their utilization and eventual publication. I have had the good fortune of seeing personally, in 1986-87, how a most modern complex of archival repository/library of the Delhi Administration has come up in the Institutional Area in South Delhi, which may hold a promise of restoration of Islamic heritage/Waqfs in Delhi. this was intimated when Mr. Jagmohan was Lt. Governor there. Perhaps, you may consider paying a visit to this complex, which may serve as a guide for our work here. It is necessary to take care of sacred Makhtotat in Muslim shrines, repositories of families of learning in Kashmir Valley, Ladakhi Gompas, Brahamans etc.

As the Publicity Secretary of the J&K Forum for Human Rights & civil Liberties, I had an Occasion to see with my own eyes how the hand-written manuscripts of holy Quran and other precious books had been put to torch in the library of Madinatul Aloom, Hazratbal in 1990. An Inquiry held in this most unfortunate incident of arson by Messers Justice Main Jalaluddin, Mr. Abdus Samad Khan, Ex-IGP and SR. Advocate G.N. Hagroo is worth reading. Recently, on 8th January, 1997, I paid a visit to Charar-e-Sharief and saw with my own eyes how the sacred Mausoleum, its Khanqah with precious archives and the neighboring township with private repositories have been reduced to ashes as a result of the vandalism that took place there in April, 1995.

All these things make the job of the Committee more difficult, especially when basic heights are denied and human rights violations continue unabated. Even a Minister of State (Refer Mr. Mohammed Sharief Tariq's) Message published in SRINAGAR TIMES 28-11-96 has coededed that the unique environment, its water bodies, its social fabric, its heritage, culture and civilization are all passing through a critical period. He has correctly said so.

Notwithstanding all this, and provided this Committee is not motivated by empirical political consideration, we here in Kashmir are prepared to consider create a NGO to co-operate with it in case some suitable provision is made to meet the expenses on meetings, briefings, travel to private repositories/parties, stationery and other incidentals.

Your's Sincerely,
M.A. Pandit.

To:
Shri B. P. Sharma,
Jammu.

11 Jan. 1997

Respected Dr Sahib,

I consider it was one of the most treasured moments of my life when on 8th instant, Mr G.N. Gauhar and myself had the proudest previlige of offering a velvet Chadar to the tomb of the Holy Saint at Charar-a-Sharief, on the occasion of formal release of Mr Gauhar's edited book Alamdar (Urdu).

Now, in this background, I would like to inform you that another book entitled ALMDAR-I-KASHMIR, STANDARD BEARER AND PATRON SATNT OF KASHMIR (ENGLISH) edited by me is under print and likely to be ready for release within a month or two. Copy of my letter to Prof. Margoob Banahali self-explanatory is herwith.

I would request you to please consider attending the proposed function as the chief guest. In the alternative would you please condescend to write a Forward to this publication.

I hope you received a copy of my book FESTIVALS OF KASHMIR.

Thanking you, Sir,
yours sincerely,
(M.Amin Pandit)

Dr. Karan Singhji.
New Delhi

P.S.

In case Mr Teja Singh of your panel would be interested to procure copies in bulk of my book-KASHMIR DEADLOCK, KEYS TO UNLOCK-(English), now in the process of printing, he may be advised to contact M/S Shiekh Mohammad Usman and Sons, Booksellers, Madina Chowk, Gaw Kadal, Srinagar. Mr Teja Singh was my college-mate but I do not have his Jammu address.

Copy to:

1. Prof. Margoob Banahali,
2. Mr G.N. Gauhar.

18 Jan, 1997

Shri S.L. Bhat IAS,
Divisional Commissioner, Kashmir,
Srinagar

Subject Relief to victims of Charar-e-Sharief.

Reference: Your No. Relief-1300/95 dt 21-11-96

Sir,

Your good self wanted me to discuss with you the subject cited above and to review the relief provided from the Red Cross resources, but a date could not be fixed. thanks to the dye function of our telephone exchange.

In the meanwhile, I had an occasion to visit the holy Shrine on 8-1-97, in connection with the release of a book by Mr, G. N. Gauhar titled "ALAMDAR". which was formally received by Haji G. Q. Drabu, Chairman, Muslim Auqaf Trust.

My on-the-spot observation revealed that the question of relief has assumed gigantic preparations.

May I therefore humbly submit that a broad based meeting be convened to which M/S Drabu and Gauhar as also the Deputy Commissioner, Budgam be invited with an advice to the D.C. to please come up with a comprehensive note to serve as background for the proposed meeting, which may be held after the holy month of Ramzan.

Thanking you, Sir,

Yours Sincerely,
M. Amin Pandit.

copy to
1. Haji G. Q. Drabu, Chairman MAT.
2. Mr. G. N. Gauhar, Charar-e-Sharief.

Dy Minister Status for B.P. Sharma

JAMMU, The government has constituted a committee to advise regarding the steps to be taken to preserve precious archival material in the State of Jammu and Kashmir.

Shri BP Sharma veteran journalist and research scholar has been appointed its Chairman with the status of a Deputy Minister.

Other members of the committee are Mr MY Teing, Mr Noor Mohammad, Mr ML Kapur and Dr Ved Kumari Ghai.

The committee will submit its report within one year.

(News-item)

My dear Amin Sahib,

It was with the greatest pleasure and admiration that I read about your memorable book the Festivals of Kashmir in Kashmir Times, by your ershwhile colleague B .P. Sharma.

How I wish Kashmir Council of Research were alive to celebrate the day of Alhaj M. A Pandit General secretary day with great festivity. You have continued to forward the cause of the council and have been working on our cherished subject. Heritage of Kashmir" untiringly. God bless you. Inspite of bad health you have been able to achieve success. It is really admirable Alhamdu lillah. Congratulations; a thousand times.

You will be equally happy to know that disturbances all around have given me also peace to complete any project of translation and commentary of Holly Quran in Kashmiri and of each Rakoo there of in poetry.

Sheikh Usman has undertaken to publish it. It was he, who 1st broke news of your endeavour to me last weak here.

Yours sincerely
Arif Mirza G.H. Beg Arif

Mr. M. Amin Pandit,
Nishat - Srinagar.

10 February 1997

Dear Mr. Pandit,

This refers to your letter dated 22 January 1997.

As requested, we are sending to you a copy of the "Memory of the World: A Survey of Current Library Preservation Activities". Hope you will find this informative and useful for your work.

Requested for such proposals are sent to UNESCO through the Indian National Commission for Co-operation with UNESCO, Department of Education, Ministry of Human Resource Development, Shastri Bhavan, 'C' Wing, Dr. R.Prasad Road, New Delhi-110001.

Yours sincerely,

T.Sondhi
Documentalist
UNESCO Regional Office, New Delhi.

Mr. M.Amin Pandit
Freelance Writer
Near Water Works
Nishat
Srinagar
Kashmir-191121.

Accomp.

12-02-1997

My dear Shri Pandit,

Please refer to your post card dated 22.1.97 addressed to Dr. Karan Singh Ji, regarding copy of UNESCO guidelines. In this connection, you may please write to the UNESCO office at Delhi at the following address:-

The Director and UNESCO
Representative to India
UNESCO House, 8 Poorvi Marg,
Vasant Vihar,

Yours Faithfully,

(H.L.Kapur)
Secretary to Dr. Karan Singh

Shri M. Amin Pandit
Near Water Works, Nishat,
Srinagar-191121.

233 Sanjay Mor.
Shastari Nagar Jammu Tawi

12 February, 1997.

My Dear Pandit Sahib,

Your kind fast flying post card dated 31 Jan 1997 came to hand yesterday at about 2 P.M.

I am really happy to note that the activities of our postal department have considerably improved. I never imagined it will reach Nishat so quickly particularly during these cold days.

I am glad to know that you have kept alive the memory of 'marhoom' Kashmir Council of Research, so dear to us. I wish we could revive it and leave it behind for our younger generation to continue the research work on various forgotten contributions made by Kashmiries in the past.

As you too are eager to see it revive, let us make another effort by making use of the teachers (lecturers & professors) of our Private B-Ed Colleges of which we have a union; which elected me as chairman.

By the way I discovered our erstwhile vice president Dr Ganju working as a professor in Sir Syed College of B.Ed Baghat. As I spend about few months in Jammu, where I found Dr. Teng & prof-pandita living, I am trying to contact them & propose doing some work here also.

Though age is a handicap, but my spirits are still young, and I hope we can contribute our mite till we live.

I hope you have included my article The multidimensional personality of Shaikhul Alam" in the book that you have edited as General Secretary of R.C.R. I shall be looking forward for a copy of the Book.

I hope to be in Srinagar by about 2nd or 3rd week of March, inshaullah.

I am very happy to reach about three books more that are being printed by Shaikh Usman.

The sentence that you have added with what financial gains!" is known to all writers of Kashmir, perhapsly most of the writers of the subcontinent.

Very few lucky writers see financial benefits of their labours.

In addition of the prose&poetry rendering of the meaning of the Arabic text of the Holy Quran I have two more books ready for print, one in English & another is Urdu, the latter has a foreward by Dr. Hamidi but it could not see the light of the day for some obvious reasons; the Henafi and Shafi view points. Inshaullah when we meet in Kashmir. We shall talk about printing of the two. I have not entrusted them to Sh. Usman yet.

I hope you are keeping fit. I cannot spend winter in Kashmir because of its effect my lungs.

By the way

P.S. Do you have any idea or knowledge of what happened to the book that was being compiled by Prof. Margoob onbehalf of Iqbal Academy. One day in oct 96 Dr Nahvi told me it was ready & was going to be printed. It was being compiled from diaries left behind by Late Amin Buch.

With Kindest regards

Yours Sincerely,
(Mirza G. H. Beg Arif)

Al-haj M. Amin Pandit,
Nishat - Srinagar - Kashmir.

From,
Parvez Dewan
Principal Secretary to the Governor
Jammu and Kashmir.

04-03-1997

Dear Mr. M. A. Pandit,

Thankyou for your letter as well as the excellent book (Festivals of Kashmir) which you sent alongwith.

Please accept my sincerest compliments on the same.

With regards.

Yours Sincerely,

(Parvez Dewan)

Shri M. Amin Pandit
Nishat, Srinagar,
Kashmir -191121.

KASHMIR LITERATEURES REMEMBER SHEIKH-UL-AALAM

Excelsior Correspondent

SRINAGAR, Jan 10, 1997: A large number of Kashmiri writers and intellectuals participated in an impressive get-together at the historic mausoleum of the 14th century Rishi Saint Sheikh-ul-Aalam Sheikh Noor-ud-Din Noorani at Chrar-e-Shareef, paid rich tributes to the literary and spiritual luminary and resolved to preserve and promote his teachings for the contemporary world.

Writer members of Kashmir Cultural Organisation (KCO), Cultural Forum and Markazi Adab Charar-e-Sharief converged on the mausoleum to participate in the function for which the doors of sanctum sanctorum were opened as a special arrangement. Chairman Muslim Auqaf Trust Ghulam Qadir Drabu was personally supervising the arrangements.

KCO chief Ghulam Nabi Gauhar wrapped the Saint's tomb with a velvet Chadar. Verses of prominent Kashmiri poets from Baba Dawood Khaki to the contemporaries eulogising Sheikh-ul-Aalam have been embroidered by eminent Kashmiri artists on the special 'Chadar'.

In the function presided over by Professor Rafi-ud-Din Bukhari and Dr. Margoob Banihali in two sessions. a souvenir was released in honour and memory of Sheikh-ul-Aalam,containing a collection of Urdu discourses on the life and literary attainments of the Rishi Saint. A Mushaira was also organised in which over two dozen poets participated and paid rich tributes to Sheikh-ul-Aalam. Mr. Sheikh Aijaz,representative of the renowned publishers Sheikh Mohd Usman & Sons announced on the occasion that the Sheikh's biography in Urdu, translation and commentary on his verses, an English publication of Kashmir Council of Research titled "Alamdar of Kashmir" would be released in near future.

Yaseen Sagar, a local cultural activist,complained in his memorandum that the Kashmiri writers' community had remained "cool" to the Chrar-e-Sharief tragedy on May, 1995.



The Author and the Publisher are standing in front of the Tomp of the Holy Saint in Santum Sactorum Chaier-e-Sharief

UNESCO GUIDELINES ON PRESERVATION OF RECORDS

1.1 The past is both a precious asset and a limited resource; its future is entrusted to all of us alive today. Documentary heritage represents a large proportion of the world's cultural heritage.

1.2 In common with natural and cultural sites, documentary heritage is subject to deterioration and destruction. Indeed, documentary heritage is even more fragile. Composed mostly of natural or synthetic organic materials which are subject to chemical instability and breakdown, documentary heritage is continually in danger of irreparable damage. This can occur through natural calamities, such as flood and fire; through man disasters such as accident or war; and through gradual deterioration, which may be the result of human ignorance or omission in providing basic care, housing and protection. In the case of documentary heritage which exists in an electronic format, loss often results from technical obsolescence.

1.3 Significant collections world wide have suffered a variety of fates. Damage from war and civil unrest, looting and dispersal, illegal trading, destruction, inadequate housing and preservation, and financial stringency have all played their part in endangering documentary heritage.

1.4 In 1992, in an attempt to improve the parlous state of preservation of and access to documentary heritage in various parts of the world UNESCO established the Memory of the World Programme.

1.5 The UNESCO Memory of the World Programme is aimed at safeguarding the world's documentary heritage, democratizing access to it, and raising awareness of its significance and of the need to preserve it.

1.6 The Memory of the World Programme will identify documentary heritage of international, regional and national significance. It will establish and maintain lists of all material identified as comprising part of the Memory of the World and will employ the Memory of the World logo to increase awareness of the

problem.

1.7 An International Memory of the World Advisory Committee was established in 1993. Throughout 1994 and 1995 seven pilot projects were commenced. In addition to employing traditional preservation techniques, each takes advantage of modern technology to reproduce the text, images and sound of the original documentary heritage material to other media. In 1995 the guidelines for the operation of the programme were adopted.

1.8 At the 1993 meeting of the International Memory of the World Advisory Committee it was agreed that the following be compiled:

-a list of library collections and archive holdings that have suffered irreparable damage in the 20th Century:

-a list of endangered library collections and archive holdings; and

-a list of current activities aimed at the safeguarding of documentary heritage;

1.9 UNESCO contracted the International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions (IFLA) and the International Council on Archives (ICA) each to prepare, for library and archive collections respectively, a list of library collections and archive fonds that have suffered irreparable damage in the 20th Century and a list of current activities aimed at the safeguarding of documentary heritage. UNESCO, through its National Commissions, prepared a list of endangered library collections and archive holdings. These lists were compiled during 1995.

1.10 IFLA's portion of these tasks is reported in two documents;

A report, prepared by Mr H. van der Hoeven, Koninklijke Bibliotheek, The Hague, The Netherlands, that describes library and collections destroyed or damaged in the twentieth century. The information in this study was obtained by desk research. Along with the results of the similar ICA study, this work has been published as Lost Memory-libraries and archives destroyed in the twentieth century.

This report of current library preservation activities and lists of significant documentary heritage held by major libraries throughout the world.

1.10 These tasks have been carried out separately by IFLA in an attempt to emphasise the importance of looking forward. Documentary heritage has been lost in the past and will continue

to disappear in the future. UNESCO's aim is to ensure that significant material is identified and saved. Today's technology enables us to record the location of important documentary heritage and to gain access to it. This survey was intended to identify problems in various parts of the world, to identify the location of significant documentary heritage and to obtain a snapshot of current preservation practices.

CONCLUSIONS

4.1 Like all previous surveys, this one indicated that there is a large amount of highly significant documentary heritage material at risk. Indeed many of the figures indicate a deterioration from the 1986 UNESCO/IFLA/ICA survey. However, useful comparisons are difficult without having detailed knowledge of the institutions responding to the 1986 survey.

4.2 There are two areas in which the present survey differs from previous ones.

It was designed to be used on a continuing basis and to enable ready comparisons. It is useable in a number of different languages and should be useful on an international as well as a national basis.

It contains lists of documentary heritage of national and international significance. These lists should prove invaluable in assisting international cooperative projects.

4.3 A comment about gathering information from around the world may be useful for those involved in subsequent phases. Questionnaires have become a common tool in achieving world wide coverage. Obviously they are far from ideal. Language difficulties have to be overcome, cultural differences often represent an invisible barrier and the ever present problem of conflicting demands on time make questionnaires a less than ideal method for collecting information. In addition, it is difficult to compile comprehensive mailing lists and a worldwide 'questionnaire fatigue' which results in a poor response rate, is developing. These constraints should also be borne in mind when considering the results of the survey reported in Part 3 of this report.

4.4 Clearly significant problems remain: large parts of the world's documentary heritage recognised as being of world significance.

4.5 Regardless of the difficulties, the survey has demonstrated that there is a strong interest in the programme. This interest will

be followed up with promotional and instructional material. The lists of nationally and internationally significant documentary heritage have the potential to assist in the development of national and regional alliances. By taking advantage of rapid advances in communications technology UNESCO will be able to make this information available on the Internet thereby encouraging international cooperation.

4.6 A comparison with the UNESCO Convention concerning the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage may be encouraging. This programme has succeeded in convincing most nations that our built and natural heritage is a universal responsibility and treasure. However, this recognition did not occur overnight. The programme originated in 1960 when the monuments of Nubia were threatened by the construction of the Aswan Dam. Not until 1972 was agreement reached on the establishment of a convention and it took until 1974 for the first country. Egypt, to sign the convention. Now almost 25 years later 140 countries are parties to the convention and the World heritage list contains 440 entries.

4.7 In a similar way, recent destruction to significant parts of the world's documentary heritage has led to the establishment of the Memory of the World Programme. The challenge for the Programme is to extend the universal responsibility for protection of our heritage to documentary materials. This survey comprises one of the important first activities which will assist in ensuring that the Programme has a future.

(Source: UNESCO Publication entitled "Memory of the World A Survey of Current library Preservation Activities" prepared for UNESCO on behalf of International Federation of library Associations and Institutions by Jan Lyall, National Library of Australia-c 11-96/WS -7,October, 1996, UNESCO HQS, Paris.)

LADAKH

By

Alexander Cunningham

The book contains a full and accurate account of Ladakh. The various informations will be of interest not only to the antiquary and scientific enquirer but also to the general reader.

In the book Ladakh has been identified with the Akhasa Regio of Ptolemy and the proof that Graucasus was a Tibetan word and that the Tibetan people and language was once spread over a much greater extent than what they now occupy.

The subject for the man of science are : the determination of the snowline on several mountain ranges of the Punjab; the cataclysus of the Indus and the Sutlej; obeservations for temperatures; Tables of Magnetical and Meteorogical Observations; and the discovery of fossil fresh water shells in the sandy clay formations above the level of the present salt water lakes of Ladakh.

ISBN 81-86714-02-2 Rs. 700.00

Sole Distributor :

Sheikh Mohammad Usman & Sons (Regd.)

Exchange Road, Gow Kadal Chowk,

Srinagar-190001 (Kashmir)